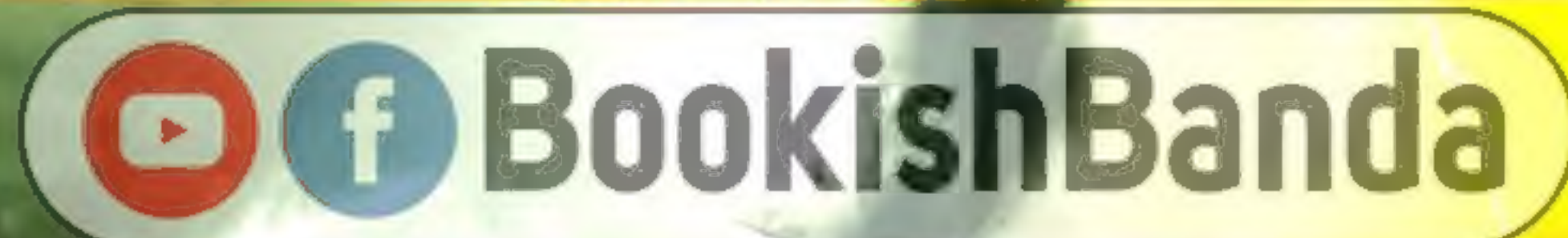


— The Flood Disaster —

JAHANGIR'S

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WORLD TIMES



THE

CLIMATE



CATASTROPHE

EDITORIAL

The Climate Catastrophe

"The climate crisis is the defining issue of our time. It must be the first priority of every government and multilateral organization. And yet climate action is being put on the back burner – despite overwhelming public support around the world."

These words uttered by UN Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, in his address to the General Assembly vividly depict the state of climate crisis – and (in)action.

There are no two opinions that climate crisis is the defining issue of our time. The effects of this global phenomenon are being witnessed in all corners of the world. Recent catastrophic floods in Pakistan, hurricanes in Cuba and the United States, typhoons and cyclones in Southeast Asia, extreme weather conditions in Europe, and long heatwaves witnessed in South Asian countries are but some manifestations of the climate catastrophe that is right upon us, and more worrying is the fact that once-in-a-lifetime climate shocks may soon become once-a-year events.

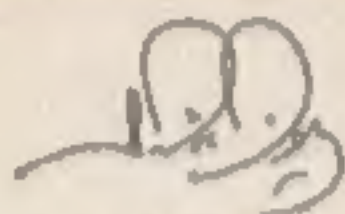
So, the warnings that have been issued by environmental experts, including the United Nations agencies, over the years are now coming out as an open reality. It must be noted here that in November 2018, the United Nations warned that "the world is losing the environmental war." Although around 120 countries, at the Glasgow Climate Summit (COP26) in early November 2021, pledged to keep the global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, the goal is still elusive despite the fact that failure to correct environmental issues can lead to new epidemics, earthquakes, storms and untold disasters. That's why the UN Secretary-General had made a painful appeal to world leaders to play their part to save humanity.

It is an established fact that the planet is burning due to climate change and that it is the developed nations, especially G20 countries, which are responsible for around 80 percent of the toxic-gas emission. The honorable Secretary-General stated an indubitable fact when, in his address to UNGA, he said, "The G20 emits 80 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions. But the poorest and most vulnerable – those who contributed least to this crisis – are bearing its most brutal impacts."

However, it is, indeed, a travesty of justice that most brunt is being borne by the developing world! Pakistan and other such countries are suffering the worst effects. Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif, rightly pointed out in his address to the world leaders at the 77th session of the UN General Assembly that Pakistan is facing the most devastating floods in its history and this disaster is due to the flawed policies adopted by the developed world. Despite the fact that Pakistan's share is not even one percent, we are among the ten countries in the world that suffer the most from the devastating effects of air pollution caused by these gases. The premier said, "The undeniable truth is that the calamity has not been triggered by anything we have done," adding that "Nature has unleashed her fury on Pakistan without looking at our carbon footprint, which is next to nothing. Our actions did not contribute to this."

Although the world community has lent a helping hand to Pakistan to cope with the disastrous impacts of floods, yet it is not generosity on their part but a basic requirement of justice. However, the real justice, in the words of federal minister for climate change, Ms Sherry Rehman, is that these countries "owe reparations to countries facing climate disaster."

It is a bitter yet undeniable truth that the global climate crisis, with the passage of time, is becoming more serious and more evident and the consequences of it are being borne by countries like Pakistan. Undoubtedly, the international community should adopt a common plan of action and provide aid on a priority basis to countries facing severe climate change threats. According to experts, global warming is many times dangerous and it is the first problem of the entire humanity. We cannot turn a blind eye to this serious problem.



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Combating the Flood Disaster

In the wake of severe floods, it has been estimated that the country has faced a damage to the extent of \$28 billion, along with an upsurge in poverty by 5 percent, indicating that nine to 12 million people might fall below the poverty line. On unemployment front, official estimates reveal that 1.8 to two million jobs have been lost in this flood. The government has made up plans for reconstruction and suggested that it might take two to 10 years for long-term construction of the flood-affected areas. Average inflation might touch 23 to 25 percent mark in current fiscal. Alarming, the Planning Commission concedes that the agriculture growth might plunge into negative by -0.7 to -2.1 percent compared to the envisaged target of positive 3.9 percent for current fiscal. Export losses might face a burnt of \$3 billion. In external sector, overall export losses are anticipated to be around \$3 billion during FY23 due to a decline in global demand and lower exports of rice, cotton, fruits and vegetables. Import of raw cotton, wheat, and vegetables is expected to increase due to flood losses. Water availability is expected to improve energy mix, resulting in lower oil imports. This is a very bleak picture of the state of affairs and the concerned authorities need to shun their traditional practices and devise a strategy to proactively combat the situation.

Yahya Munir Qaisrani, Rajanpur

Harassment of Women

There is a large majority of working women in Pakistan who are victims of different forms of harassment but are forced to continue their jobs in hostile working environments. Those who are able to take a stand are confronted by numerous challenges in their fight for justice, a process that further normalises workplace harassment. Despite the existence of laws to protect women against sexual harassment at their places of work, they continue to experience physical, sexual, verbal and emotional victimisation. Whilst the laws are there to encourage and support women to challenge their treatment, many professional environments remain toxic, and perpetrators are not discouraged from subjecting women to humiliation. Pakistan has always struggled to protect human rights, especially women rights, as per international standards. The shifting pattern of globalization has resulted in more female participation in the workplace, but this economic growth came at a cost of human rights. The redressal system for women experiencing harassment and humiliation is flawed. Mechanisms are not sufficiently comprehensive and robust. Harassment of women continues unabated because there are too many inconsistencies in the system.

Sadia Jatoi, DG Khan

Need for Dialogue

Every segment of the society is highly concerned over the current political instability which is also impacting the country's economy. Important institutions such as the judiciary also cannot stay aloof to it. This is the reason that honourable Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Umar Ata Bandial has recently called for dialogue to settle all political issues, and emphasised that progress can only be made if all political parties followed the established democratic practices and performed their respective roles in parliament under the Constitution. This advice on the part of honourable CJP should not go unnoticed rather the political players whilst rising above their petty political interests should come together for the sake of the country. Heads of all important institutions including the judiciary as well as the President can play their role to bring both the incumbent government and the PTI leadership on the table of negotiations. It will be a great service to the nation if they do so.

Shahzad Shaukat, Islamabad

Transgender Rights in Focus

A law that provides legal recognition to transgender persons and prohibits discrimination and harassment has stirred a new debate in Pakistan. The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act was passed in 2018, granting legal recognition to transgender persons and prohibiting discrimination against them in several spheres of public life. The Act passed with a parliamentary majority, as all bills do, and the public praised this law. Now, four years after the passing of this law, recent bad-faith misinformation campaigns and malicious political play on social media have renewed interest in this law and have successfully misguided certain parts of the public to advocate for the repeal of this law despite the fact that it was enacted for the welfare of one of the most disadvantaged and helpless communities in the country. It speaks strictly only about fundamental rights, criminalising discrimination and harassment against transgender persons, and advocating for inclusion in educational institutions and services. The government must adopt political will and remain steadfast in the implementation of this law.

Sajjad Ali Mahesar, Khairpur

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ossby waves, also known as planetary waves, are a type of inertial wave that naturally occurs in rotating fluids. Within the Earth's ocean and atmosphere, these planetary waves play a significant role in shaping weather.

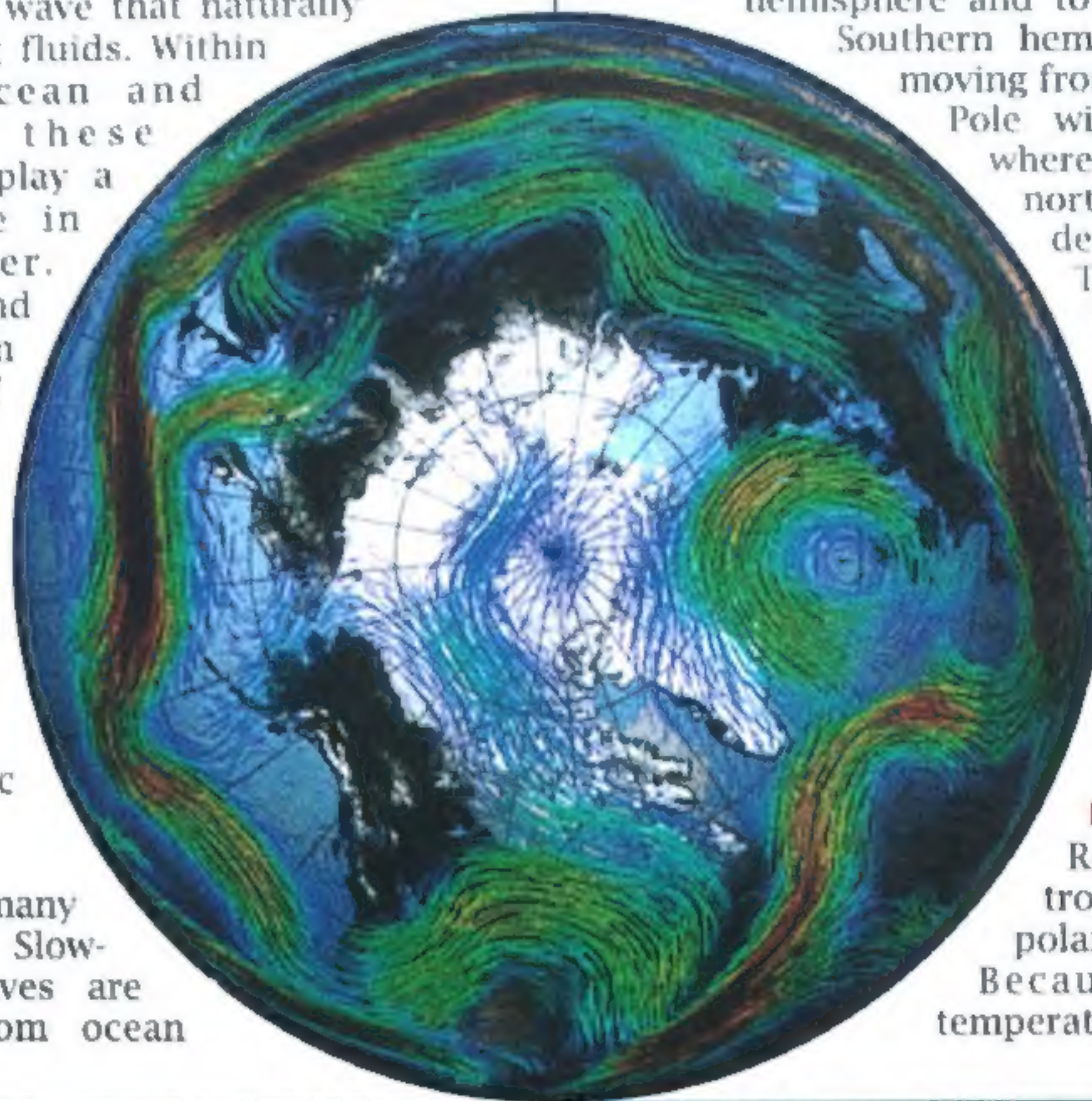
Within the Earth's ocean and atmosphere, these waves form as a result of the rotation of the planet. Rossby waves are named for famous meteorologist Carl-Gustaf Rossby who was the first to explain that these waves arose due to the rotation of the Earth.

Types

They are of two types: oceanic and atmospheric.

Oceanic Rossby Waves

Waves in the ocean come in many different shapes and sizes. Slow-moving oceanic Rossby waves are fundamentally different from ocean



fluid to move towards the right as they move in the Northern hemisphere and to the left as they move in the Southern hemisphere. For example, a fluid moving from the equator toward the North Pole will deviate towards the east whereas the fluid moving from the north towards the equator will deviate towards the west.

These deviations are generated by Coriolis force and conservation of potential vorticity which gives rise to change in relative vorticity. This is similar to the conservation of angular momentum in the mechanism. In the planetary atmosphere, including Earth, the Rossby waves are caused due to changes in the Coriolis effect with latitude.

Formation

Rossby waves are formed when tropical air is moving poleward and polar air moves towards the equator. Because of the difference in temperature between the Equator and the

ROSSBY WAVES

Scientists have recently suggested that the phenomenon that is responsible for some recent extreme weather events like extreme floods in Pakistan and record-breaking heatwaves and droughts in Western Europe and central and eastern China is Rossby Waves.

surface waves. Unlike waves that break along the shore, Rossby waves are huge, undulating movements of the ocean that stretch horizontally across the planet for hundreds of kilometres in a westward direction. They are so large and massive that they can change Earth's climate conditions. Along with rising sea levels, King Tides, and the effects of El Niño, oceanic Rossby waves contribute to high tides and coastal flooding in some regions of the world.

Rossby wave movement is complex. The horizontal wave speed of a Rossby (the amount of time it takes the wave to travel across an ocean basin) is dependent upon the latitude of the wave. In the Pacific, for instance, waves at lower latitudes (closer to the equator) may take months to a year to cross the ocean. Waves that form farther away from the equator (at mid-latitudes) of the Pacific may take closer to 10 to 20 years to make the journey. The vertical motion of Rossby waves is small along the ocean's surface and large along the deeper thermocline — the transition area between the ocean's warm upper layer and colder depths. This variation in vertical motion of the water's surface can be quite dramatic: the typical vertical movement of the water's surface is generally about 10 centimeters, while the vertical movement of the thermocline for the same wave is approximately 1,000 times greater. In other words, for a 10-centimetre or less surface displacement along the ocean surface, there may be more than 91.4 metres of corresponding vertical movement in the thermocline far below the surface! Due to the small vertical movement along the ocean surface, oceanic Rossby waves are undetectable by the human eye. Scientists typically rely on satellite radar altimetry to detect the massive waves.

Atmospheric Rossby Waves

Atmospheric Rossby waves primarily result from the conservation of potential vorticity and are affected by the Coriolis force and pressure gradient. The rotation causes

poles due to the difference in the amount of solar radiation received, heat tends to flow from low to high latitudes. This is attained in part, by these air movements.

Rossby waves are the principal component of the Ferrel circulation. The heat is transferred to the poleward by the tropical waves and polar air absorbs heat as it moves toward the equator.

The existence of the Rossby waves explains cyclones and anticyclones.

Effects on weather

These waves have a huge effect on our atmosphere and oceans. As James R. Holton and Gregory J. Hakim write in their book, "An Introduction to Dynamic Meteorology," Rossby waves are "[the] wave type that is of the most importance for large-scale meteorological processes." They influence everything from high tides to extreme weather patterns. And that's just what happens on Earth. Let us not ignore the sun, which experiences Rossby waves of its own. So do the atmospheres of Venus and Jupiter.

Rossby Number

Rossby number, also known as Kibel number is a dimensionless number used for measuring liquid. It is the ratio of inertial force to Coriolis force for a given flow of rotating liquid. Rossby number is commonly used in the geographical phenomena in the atmosphere and ocean, where it features the importance of Coriolis acceleration, originating from planetary rotation.

Rossby Number is defined as the:

$$R_o = U/Lf$$

In the above equation, U is the velocity scale, f is the Coriolis parameter, and L is the horizontal length scale. ■



The writer is a member of staff.

WORLD AGENDA

OCTOBER 2022

1 Oct 16, China: The Communist Party holds its five-yearly congress, with *Xi Jinping* set for an unprecedented third term in power. Effectively made "president for life" in 2018, Xi is seen as the nation's most powerful ruler since *Mao Zedong*

2 Oct 2, Brazil: With far-right incumbent *Jair Bolsonaro* trailing leftist former president *Lula Inácio Lula da Silva* in the polls, Brazil is braced for a Trump-like refusal from its current leader to accept defeat in the general election

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3 Oct 11, Japan: Tough pandemic-related border restrictions are to be scrapped, paving the way for mass tourism for the first time in over two years

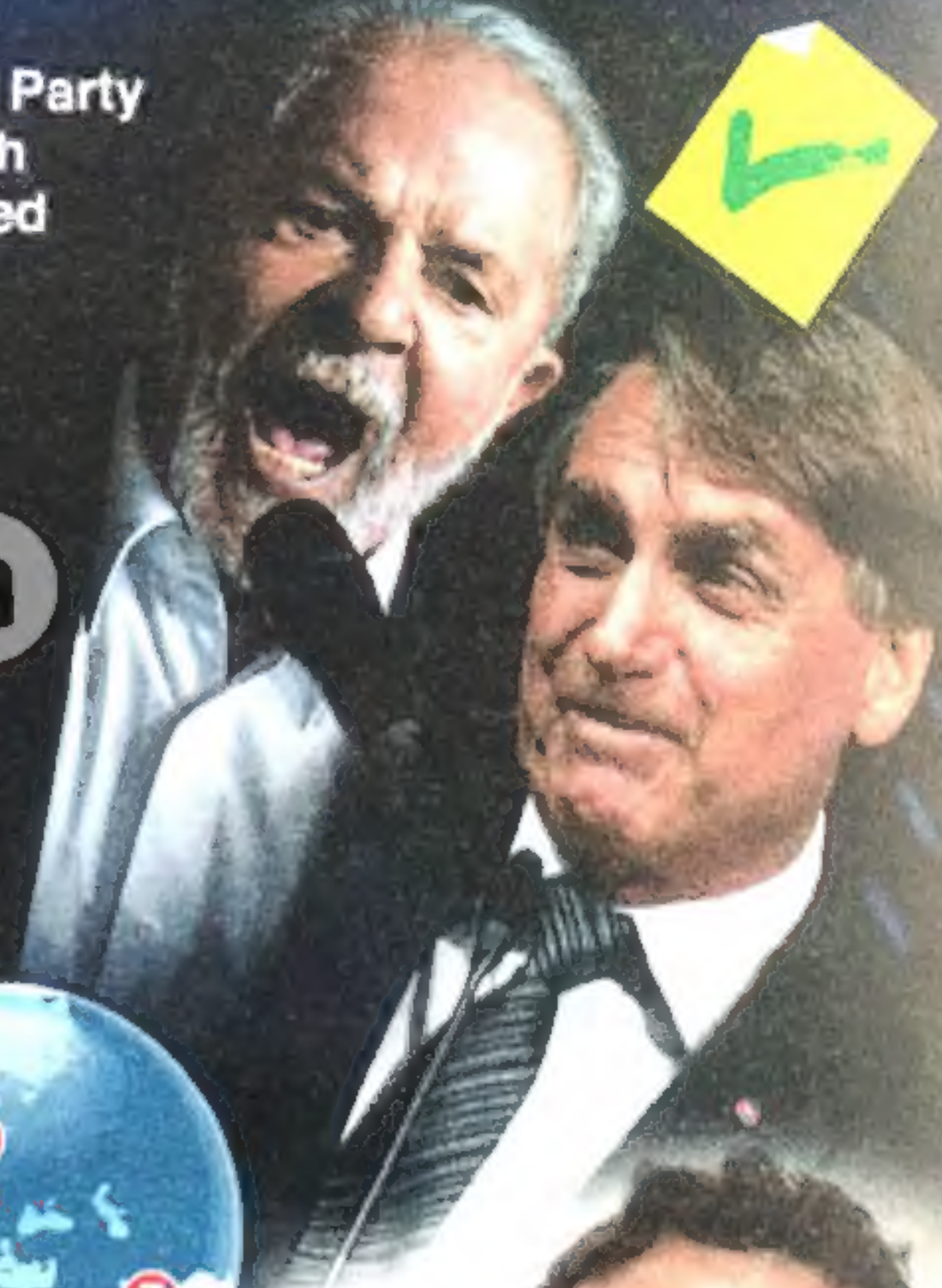
5 Oct, France: The *European Space Agency* wraps up its 18-month selection process to recruit 4-6 new astronauts, including one chosen from applicants with disabilities

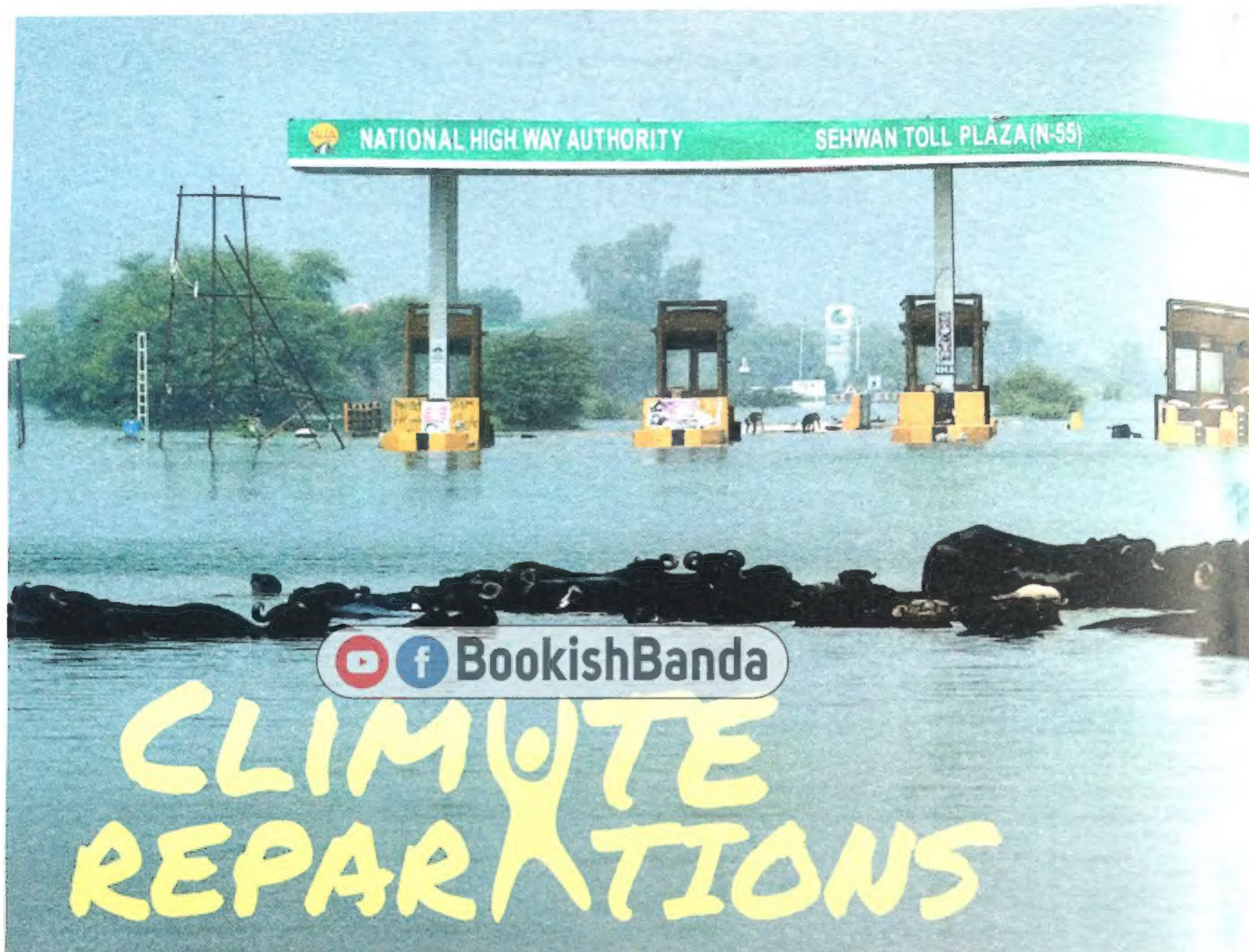
6 Oct 3-10: Sweden & Norway: The 2022 *Nobel Prize* winners are named, with the Peace award announced on Oct 7

7 Oct 1, United Arab Emirates: The site of the *Dubai Expo 2020* exhibition reopens as *Expo City Dubal*, billed as a clean, green and tech-enabled city built around sustainability

4 Oct 6, Czech Rep.: EU and aspirant nations, plus the UK, Israel and Turkey, are invited to the first meeting of a new *European Political Community*, proposed by French president *Emmanuel Macron* to bolster regional co-operation in the face of Russian aggression

8 Oct 1-2, Mongolia: Up to 80 eagle hunters take part in the *Golden Eagle Festival* in Bayan-Ulgii, a two-day display of traditional hunting skills based on the eagle's speed, agility and accuracy





The Case of Pakistan

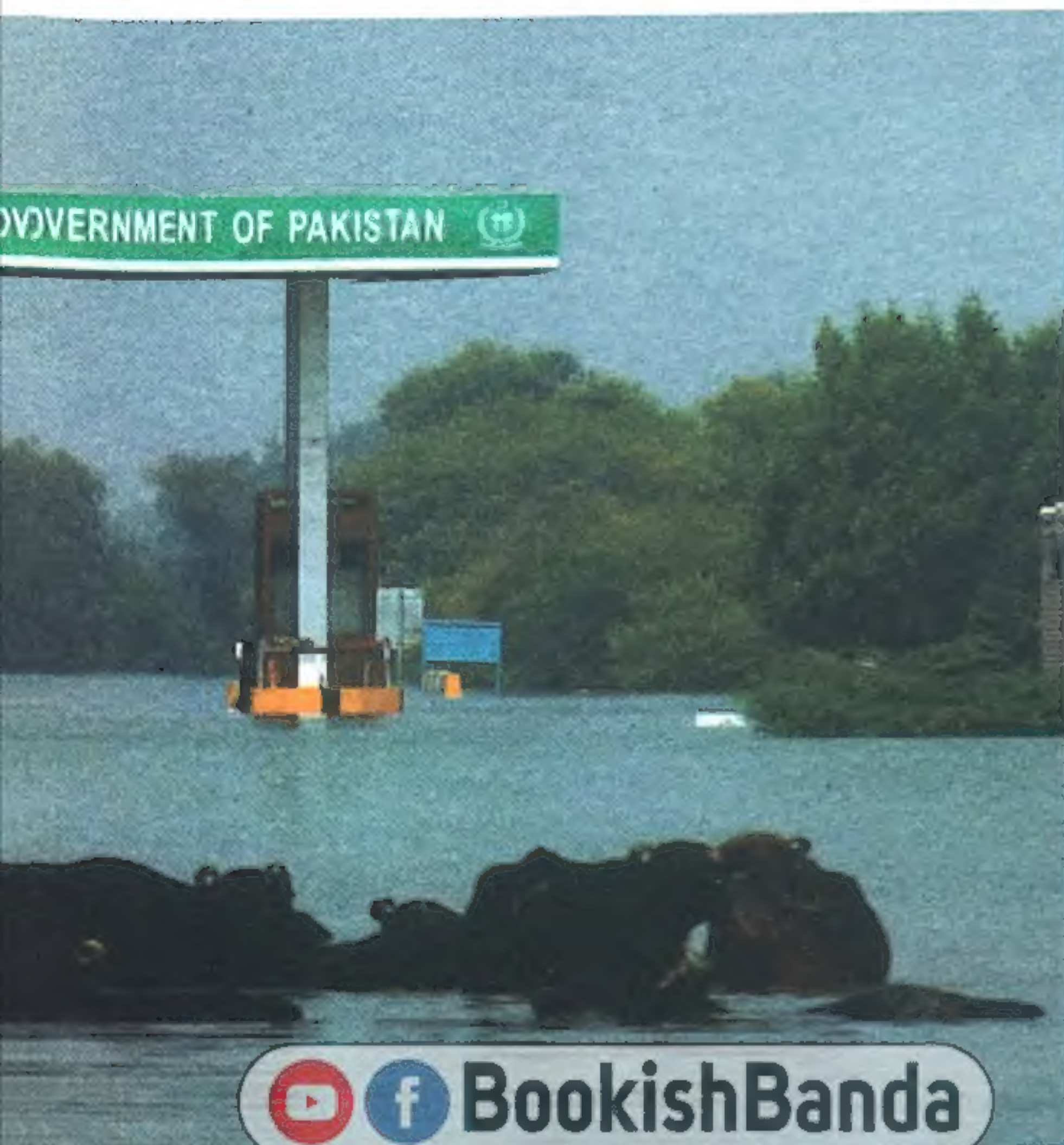
***"The future is already here. It's just not evenly distributed yet."* — William Gibson**

For Pakistan and other nations in the Global South, a climate-destabilized future is not some faraway science fiction fantasy. Climate change impacts are here, with many people already living in a modern dystopia. The impacts of climate change are not evenly distributed, and neither is the blame. Just three nations — the United States, China, and India — account for over half of carbon emissions. Who should pay for Pakistan's loss and damage? And what should be done to prevent and compensate for climatic harm disproportionately borne by developing nations?

As the scale of flood devastation becomes apparent, the sense of climate injustice is rightfully mounting. There is so much loss and damage with so little reparations to countries that contributed so little to the world's carbon

footprint that obviously the bargain made between the Global North and Global South is not working. Global warming is the existential crisis facing the world and Pakistan is ground zero but, unfortunately, is also the victim of apathy and indifference of the Western nations as the catastrophic floods have caused \$30 billion of damage but there is little aid to help Pakistan fight this mighty challenge. There can be little doubt that destructive climate change is the result of 150 years of rapid industrialisation, most of which was driven by the rich countries of the West. Pakistan, by contrast, has contributed less than one percent to global greenhouse gas emissions.

Recently, United Nations Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, visited Pakistan where he witnessed the



'unimaginable' destruction caused by the heavy flood that all experts believe is one of the climate change-related disasters to which Pakistan is the eighth most vulnerable country despite the fact that it emits less than one percent of global greenhouse gases. During his press talks, the honourable guest urged the rich countries to step up their climate-adaptation financing and sought urgent discussions on loss and damage due to the climate crisis. He placed the blame on developed countries, particularly the G20 countries, which are historically responsible for 80 percent of greenhouse gas emissions. He also requested the G20 nations to boost national emissions-reduction targets yearly till the world achieves the

warming limit of 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels. Pakistani cities, villages, and massive swaths of farmland are underwater due to the heaviest rainfalls ever recorded in Pakistan's history. Scientists link this torrential downpour to human-caused climate change. Crucially, the flood is expected to add \$30 billion worth of damage to an already teetering economy. More than 793,900 livestock have died, and families across Pakistan have been deprived of a critical source of sustenance and livelihood. Around two million acres of crops and orchards have been impacted. These impacts are undeniably a symptom of an accelerating climate crisis. Julien Harneis, the UN humanitarian coordinator in Pakistan, has rightly said: 'This super flood is driven by climate change — the causes are international'.

Keeping in view the damage the developed world has done to the climate across the world, and especially in Pakistan, it is in all fitness of things that the country demands reparations as compensation for the devastation the country has been experiencing as a result of climate change. Pakistan is justified in putting forward its expectations for compensation from the rich countries that are mostly responsible for causing climate change. However, while the United States and other nations have pledged humanitarian assistance to Pakistan, these pledges are far short of what is needed. Given the sheer scale of destruction, Pakistan needs a bail-out in the form of rapid financial and logistical assistance from the global community.

"There is so much loss and damage with so little reparations to countries that contributed so little to the world's carbon footprint that obviously the bargain made between the global north and global south is not working. We need to be pressing very hard for a reset of the targets because climate change is accelerating much faster than predicted, on the ground, that is very clear," says Sherry Rehman, Pakistan's federal minister for climate change. The current crisis in Pakistan highlights a broader gap in international climate governance. Efforts to formalize funding from wealthier, developed nations to poorer, developing nations to address climate harm — what is known as "loss and damage" which is one of the three legs of the climate stool, other being mitigation and adaptation — have failed. But calls for loss and damage are growing louder.

But in many developed countries, this cataclysmic event has hardly seemed to be much of a priority, or even a concern. Fatima Bhutto, the activist-writer niece of the assassinated Pakistani prime minister Benazir Bhutto, wrote bitterly that: "While it has been touching to see how ordinary people from far-away countries have shown solidarity with Pakistan, donating what they can to flood relief efforts, the silence from major international figures and Western media at large has been dispiriting, if not unsurprising. The week the flood hit, there were more newspaper column inches devoted to a Finnish prime

minister who likes to party than to the fact that a third of Pakistan was submerged.”

Fatima Bhutto's point stands the ground. Imagine the shock if one third of France was under water, for instance. Pakistan may be further away from London or New York than Paris, but with British Pakistanis numbering about 1.2 million and about half a million Pakistani Americans, the flooding could not be more concerning for significant communities in the US and UK. Yet, the attention paid to the situation in Pakistan has been meagre.

Pakistanis are simmering with rage now. What else can you feel when a whopping \$894 million were raised in a day and a half after the cathedral of Notre Dame suffered a fire but an entire country of drowning poor must beg for climate aid and assistance? An unpalatable reality appears to emerge.

But, wealthy world cannot escape the time bomb its own development set off.

There remains no doubt that the people of Pakistan are the victims of a global crisis to which they have

Some International Conventions about Climate Responsibility

Climate reparations refer to a call for money to be paid by the developed countries to the developing countries as a means of addressing the historical contributions that the developed countries have made (and continue to make) toward climate change.

- **Admission of Responsibility:** The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the 1994 international agreement that lays down the broad principles of the global effort to fight climate change, explicitly acknowledges this differentiated responsibility of nations.
- It makes it very clear that rich countries must provide both finance and technology to developing nations to help them tackle climate change.
- The rich countries agreed to provide USD100 billion to the developing world every year as a result of this mandate.
- **Present Status:** The promise of USD100 billion in assistance to developing countries is yet to be completed.
- According to a recent report by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Efforts (UNOCHA), prepared for the UN General Assembly, annual funding requests related to climate-linked disasters averaged USD15.5 billion in the three-year period between 2019 and 2021.
- The United States alone is estimated to have “inflicted more than USD1.9 trillion in damages to other countries” due to its emissions.
- **Non-Economic Losses:** There are non-economic losses, including loss of lives, displacement and migration, health impacts, and damage to cultural heritage.
- **Economic Losses:** The unavoidable annual economic losses from climate change were projected to reach somewhere between USD290 billion to USD580 billion by the year 2030.
- **Initiatives:** The developing countries and NGOs managed to establish a separate channel for loss and damages at international climate change negotiations. Therefore, the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) for Loss and Damages, set up in 2013, was the first formal acknowledgment of the need to compensate developing countries struck by climate disasters.

contributed almost nothing — and which has instead been driven by the excess emissions of rich countries and corporate polluters. This fundamental injustice is at the root of increasing demands for climate reparations from Pakistan and the wider Global South. They owe reparations to countries such as Pakistan for the consequences of climate change. On the face of it, Pakistan's demand for reparations appears to be a long shot, but the principles being invoked are fairly well-established in environmental jurisprudence.

At its heart, the demand for compensation for loss and damage from climate disasters is an extension of the universally acknowledged “Polluter Pays” principle that makes the polluter liable for paying not just for the cost of remedial action, but also for compensating the victims of environmental damage caused by their actions. GHG emissions have not taken place without any cause; the Industrial Revolution and the resultant age of rapid industrialization in the past two centuries have transformed the climate of the globe. Industrialized countries have contributed nearly two-thirds of all emissions since the turn of the 20th century. From Australia, Canada and China to Europe, Japan, Russia and the United States, all have inflicted irreparable damage to climate patterns. The developing countries all combined have contributed only a fraction of the total carbon dioxide in the atmosphere but have been paying the cost of a crime they never committed. Now they have no capacity to cope with the severity of the catastrophes they face. That's why a demand for loss and damage compensation is entirely justified and must yield some results. On his visit to Pakistan, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, too, has urged global financial institutions to create a new mechanism for countries like Pakistan to enable investment in climate resilience and sustainable infrastructure, instead of getting mired in debt repayment. These are the steps needed to save countries like Pakistan from drowning due to the apathy and negligence of others.

Pakistan will have to overlay climate diplomacy on its foreign policy agenda. The fact that we lack an independent, coherent foreign policy will perversely affect our ability to forge a coherent ask of developed nations in the climate context.

Pakistan will also have to recognise that it cannot have it both ways. We subscribe to the ‘catch up’ argument — the notion that developing countries should be allowed their share of pollutants and GHG emissions to build infrastructure and spur economic growth, an argument strongly pushed by emerging economies such as India and China. This reasoning envisions the West curtailing emissions and bearing the financial costs of an economic slowdown while developing countries continue to emit, build and grow. ■

The writer is a Lahore-based academician and political analyst.



Are We, the People and Global Leaders at a Crossroads?

Mahboob Khawaja, PhD



To manifest global peace and human security, We the People of conscience ask for a reasoned dialogue for peace between the warring parties. There is no place for complicity to be indifferent to atrocities and emerging calamities or acrimonious spate of violence and madness on the other side. Superiority of intellect and information are simply imperatives of necessity, not the soul of human compassion and universal kindness. Cynicism about politicians is endemic. Mikhail Gorbachev died recently but his legacy is not absent to offer opportunities of political openness to change in Russia if collective efforts are implied to rebuild the trust between the contemporarily belligerent actors. Chernobyl nuclear meltdown is not forgotten or forbidden from fresh memory as were the nuclear incidents in Japan and the Three Mile Island, Pennsylvania. We the People of the world witnessed the unthinkable consequences of human fatalities and environmental impacts for ages to come. Scientists and engineers specializing in nuclear reactor technology must have imagined theoretical and conceptual perfection of security and peace on this planet. Not so at Zaporizhzhia (Ukraine) nuclear station under Russian control, posing a critically ferocious

problem according to the IAEA team that visited the site, calling that 'the security and integrity of the plant was violated'. Its volatility is a serious concern to all; if another meltdown happens, the competing forces would start the blame game while the human peace and security would be at a crossroads.

It is repulsive to suppose that universal harmony can be enhanced by profligacy, malevolence and horrors, and miseries of unthinkable multitudes. The IAEA team took more than two weeks just to visit the epicenter of the alleged nuclear disaster. How could the United Nations or any of its agencies assure the global humanity of its safety and survival in a nuclear meltdown? The current global institutions have a serious problem of integrity, relevance and effectiveness. Why did the UN Security Council fail to convene an emergency session and designate the nuclear establishments as 'safe zones', and 'out of bound' for all military engagements? The people around Zaporizhzhia breathe fear and sleep with invisible horrors of radiation and nuclear meltdown. The infested fear could dehumanize people all over the globe.

Despite the reality of catastrophic events of the World War II, most global leaders claiming greatness of minds and visions have lost the moral and intellectual path of

political farsightedness and accountability. The EU and NATO, and their regionalized and ethno-nationalistic propositions are fast becoming contentious issues of peace and security between the Russian Federation and the Western nations. People of knowledge and wisdom cannot make animosity a trade to endanger our future.

NATO and the EU are regionalized organizations and their advisors lack imagination of global peace and security. We the People witness a present devoid of reason and rationality, often fearing the coming of a mythological ending of a completely decadent human civilization. Some mythologists as the World Economic Forum advisor Yuval Noah Harari, explains Emily Mangiaracina in her piece "World Economic Forum Adviser Claims the Planet No Longer Needs the 'Vast Majority' of the Population," argue beyond the capacity of human nature: that the world does not "need the vast majority" of the current population due to technological advances. Harari made the bold declaration in an interview with Chris Anderson, head of the popular TED media group, echoing past predictions of a "useless class" of "unemployable" humans.

To this author, a cataclysmic nature of human intellect is unleashing a highly irrational and unthinkable world of complexity to come to our consciousness, destroying all progress and achievements of any human civilization on this planet. Most human intellect knows the basic imperative: "if you think intelligently, you could find workable remedies to human problems."

Global leaders must THINK of effective communication to resolve the emerging problems

Despite the leaders of Iran and Turkey having a working progress with President Putin for the supply of grain via Black Sea - and prospects of meetings for peace talks - no Western leaders took initiatives to break the deafening silence and come out of the box to articulate a new vision for political change, and start talking to Russian and Ukrainian leaders for an immediate ceasefire

and peace process. All parties could well use the common phenomenon and threat of nuclear arsenals/hydrogen bombs or mother of all bombs to annihilate human beings and habitats in a few seconds, if not minutes.

The failure of the global leadership and institutions more so of the UN - signals dubious conceptions of right and wrong, good and evil in problem-solving. Ukraine, Russia,

Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Kashmir and Palestine are the outcomes of consequential military invasions and aggression that kill people and destroy the Earth. History illustrates when a nation or its leaders challenge the limits of the laws of God and approach to the near end of their lifespan, insanity takes over commonsense and they tend to ignore warnings and reject all voices of reason.

The planet Earth is not a dead orbiting object, but a living entity, providing continuous nourishment to human life and existence to all other living beings. When nations and leaders subscribing to political absolutism start acting like God and challenge the sanctity and limits of the laws of God; historically speaking, they become an object of unthinkable natural calamities - earthquakes, wildfires, floods and death and destruction. The divine revelations (The Quran: 40:64), remind us, who we are and what relationship do we enjoin to Earth and its sustenance that supports our life and existence:

"It is Allah Who made the earth a place of settlement for you and the sky a canopy. He shaped you 'in the womb', perfecting your form. And He has provided you with what is good and lawful. That is

Allah—your Lord. So Blessed is Allah, Lord of all worlds."

Global humanity rejects military conquests and demands peace, security and co-existence

Sanctity of human life is grounded in realization of peace, dialogue and coexistence. The ongoing onslaught between Russia and Ukraine and the West makes no sense to rational thinking and political accountability. Appearing more like spectators, American, European and NATO leaders and their lip



service to aid Ukraine is merely a repetitive cry for public consumption.

If time and history are a reference point to avoid any conflict between man and the nature of things, we must comprehend how the planet Earth exists and moves at its axis and rotates at 1675 km per hour or 465 metres per second, that is, 1,040 miles per hour. The Earth's circumference at the equator is 40,075 km. And the length of time the Earth takes to complete one full turn on its axis is 23.93 hours. And how all the living beings get lifelong nourishment within this splendid universe? The need is urgent to understand the natural equilibrium of relationship between man, life and God – given the living universe in which we all coexist harmoniously. Modern wars represent sadistic minds to undermine and destroy all that is built over the ages that we call human cultures and civilizations. All of the monolithic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) reveal the truth of "Trust" – human

curtain: "To stop the war in Ukraine, the US, the EU, NATO should have a direct, face-to-face communication with President Putin. ... It is logical when people of diversity and opposing ideals come to talk directly, tensions and evil mongering is reduced to reason and mutual interest. This has not happened except military options for weapon supplies and enlargement of the scope of regional conflict. Time and history will not forgive nor forget any of the leaders if they failed to agree to an immediate ceasefire and peace deal."

Can we think to be human first in all of our moral, political and intellectual endeavours?

Can we look at the mirror and critically see ourselves – who we are and why have we become so stagnated in moral, spiritual and intellectual values to destroy our own existence by our own complicity? Can we see the mirror with a collective conscience and realize as if there were no people of reason and accountability populating the planet



beings took to be responsible and be at peace with the Nature of Things – the living Planet Earth. This TRUST and its reminder are explicitly mentioned in (The Qur'an, Chapter 33:72): "Indeed, We offered the trust to the heavens and the Earth and the mountains, but they 'all' declined to bear it, being fearful of it. But humanity assumed it, 'for' they are truly wrongful 'to themselves' and ignorant 'of the consequences'."

German philosopher Immanuel Kant ("Perpetual Peace", 1795), was more proactive and realist when he noted: "Intellectuals must be seated in chosen assemblies and systems of public governance to overt individualistic insanity against the people." Viewing the perpetuated chaos and nationalistic ideals of the few, no matter how time exists in a frozen leadership intellect, this author recently proposed a strategy of communication to global leaders to resolve the conflict on both sides of the iron

Earth? What kind of nuisance discovery it could be if other intelligent species from outer space (as indeed there are living beings in other planets) come to visit our Earth and its advanced knowledge-based species and their AI weapons, visual constructs and magic of conquests claiming to be the master of their destiny and sustainable future, and given the sophisticated missiles, nuclear arsenals and mother of all bombs so well placed comfortably that nothing could disrupt their lifelines except animosities, wars and wickedness to destroy their own existence on this Earth. ■

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THE TAIWAN FLASHPOINT

Sowing the seeds of WWII

Introduction

In the contemporary times, global peace is hanging by a delicate thread. Even a minute development has the potential to dismantle the entire politico-economic and social structure. Hence, there is no blinking at the fact that today's is a chaotic world that is facing numerous challenges in the domains of peace and security. It is suffering from various ills like economic stagnation and energy crisis, as well as the spectre of climate change. However, the one issue that is the greatest threat to global peace and security is of Taiwan as it has the potential to trigger World War III by bringing two major powers of the world, China and the United States, at war. The Taiwan conundrum is about the political status of the island nation of Taiwan. China claims that it is a breakaway province of the Chinese mainland that will eventually be reunited whereas the self-ruled island sees itself as distinct from the mainland, with its own constitution and democratically-elected leaders. The status quo that has persisted since 1949 has been disrupted largely by growing American military and economic engagement with Taiwan. The situation has aggravated further due to the recent visit to the island nation by the third highest official of the United States, Nancy Pelosi - the Speaker of the House of Representatives of US Congress - who has vowed to protect Taiwanese democracy and sovereignty at all costs. Although there are remote chances of an immediate, direct war owing to the immense mutual economic dependence of countries in a globalised world, yet a war can never be ruled out in the long run. Therefore, all stakeholders should take constrained measures, and the United Nations should play its due role in resolving the dispute peacefully and, thus, ensuring global peace and security.

Policies and interests of China

China considers Taiwan its integral part under 'One China' policy. It intends to reunite it with the mainland come what may. In the recently published 'White Paper', China has reiterated its stance over Taiwan and has described the reunification as "indispensable for the realisation of China's

Mohsin Qamar Jappa rejuvenation." "We are one China, and Taiwan is part of China. This is an indisputable fact supported by history and the law. Taiwan has never been a state; its status as part of China is unalterable," says the white paper.

The white paper further stated that Taiwan is being used as a 'pawn' by foreign elements to contain China, and the long standing political differences between the two sides will not be allowed to pass from one generation to the next. China has also described its strategies of reunification. First choice is the peaceful reunification using dialogue and diplomatic channels while as second option, China has declared that it would not rule out the use of force and they reserve the option of taking all necessary measures. This means China will utilise its strenuous military muscle, which it has strengthened in recent decades, to reunify Taiwan.

This Chinese effort is not only a bid to gain control over Taiwan but also has immense politico-strategic and economic significance.

- Reunification of Taiwan will bolster China's '9 Dash Line' claim in the South China Sea and the resulting advantage in claiming sovereignty over Paracel and Spratly islands.
- It will enhance China's territorial waters and fishing zones which have great significance for the Chinese economy.
- It will augment China's military capabilities by providing closer bases to counter a growing anti-China coalition in the Indo-Pacific region in the form of AUKUS and QUAD.
- In the economic domain, Taiwan is a leading producer of chips which are the essential ingredient of tech appliances. China's hi-tech exports stand at \$75bn which are immensely dependent on Taiwanese chips; therefore, control over Taiwan will create Chinese dominance in this hi-tech industry.

Therefore, it can be stated that Taiwan is the jugular vein of China.

American interests attached with Taiwan

The Thucydides' trap is a centuries-old theory which states that every rising power is countered by the existing power which considers it a threat to its supremacy and dominance. The economic miracle achieved by China by becoming the world's second largest economy with a GDP of \$19 trillion, as compared to America's \$25 trillion, is a daunting threat to the latter's dominance. Furthermore, the World Bank predicts that China will surpass the United States to become the top economy of the world by 2030 and the onslaught of Covid-19 and Russia-Ukraine war has further added an impetus to the trend. In addition, the rise in China's military prowess - with the country's defence budget exceeding \$172

billion, second only to the United States whose spending stands at \$678 billion – is also raising alarms among American policymakers as China is modernising its naval and air defence capabilities at immense pace. The addition of aircraft carriers and nuclear-powered submarines is portraying immense challenges to America in the Indo-Pacific region.

These politico-economic and military apprehensions of the United States reflect from their National Security Policy which declares China as the greatest threat to their interests. In order to counter these challenges, several US administra-

stated that the United States signed with Taiwan a deal worth \$16bn to provide the latter with modern military equipment. Hence, the United States is strengthening its engagement with Taiwan which is suspected, condemned and opposed by China in the strongest possible way.

Thirdly, President Biden's statement that "USA will defend Taiwan militarily, if China invades," during his visit to Japan in May 2022, is an expression of American policy that they intend to interfere in the internal affairs of China and that they will take every necessary step to contain China. This statement is America's marked deviation from their previous policy in which they supported One China Policy.

Lastly, Nancy Pelosi's recent visit to Taiwan is a clear indication of deepening ties between both the states, and of shifting American stance towards Taiwan. China reacted vociferously to this visit by carrying out live fire military drills and issued the white paper with harsh language to re-assert its position over Taiwan.

Consequences of the conflict

Global dynamics are changing rapidly and each country is endeavouring to position itself with maximum alliances. As Francis Fukuyama stated, "The destiny of the 20th century was shaped in the Atlantic Ocean, the future of the 21st century will be shaped in the Pacific region." This statement stands validated in recent times as each global power is in the race to maximise its influence in the Indo-Pacific region to counter its adversaries. However, it is dragging the world towards a zero-sum game. The United States, in its bid to contain China militarily and economically, is utilising all the available options in which empowering Taiwan to show resistance to a possible Chinese onslaught is the most viable. However, any escalation in this sphere can jeopardise global peace and can prod the world to WWII.

Conclusion

War is among the major constants of history; however, in the 21st century, wars, barring a few, have been limited because these are no more profitable projects. In the past, dividends incurred from war in the form of resources and materials outstripped the expenditures of war. Hence most of the great empires were established by war. However, now power lies in human resource, trade and investment which cannot be obtained by war. Therefore, countries prefer to engage with each other and secure financial benefits for them. China is the largest trading partner of Taiwan and Taiwanese hold more than \$80bn investments in China. This issue is being aggravated because of excessive American interference in Taiwan and their bid to use Taiwan as a 'pawn' to secure their geopolitical and geostrategic objectives, which is unacceptable to China. Furthermore, the United States and China also have huge economic dependence over each other as their mutual trade volume exceeds \$650bn, and no state can afford war at the expense of economic interests. Although the chances of immediate war are very scarce amidst economic constraints, the possibilities of human follies resulting in massive havoc can't be ruled out. ■

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tions have adopted a policy to formulate anti-China coalitions in the region which include QUAD – The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue consisting of Japan, India, Australia and USA – and AUKUS – Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These platforms conduct annual military drills in the Pacific region to assert their claim of an open and free Indo-Pacific region.

Secondly, America supports Taiwan in enhancing its military capabilities through modernising their air force and navy so as to give a tough time to China. SIPRI, a Stockholm-based forum on peace and development, in its annual report 2022

On September 05, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed off on a new foreign policy plan that aims to "protect, safeguard, and advance the traditions and ideals of the Russian World." Through this 31-page document, dubbed as "humanitarian policy," Russia has made protecting, safeguarding and advancing the traditions and ideals of the Russian World its official doctrine. The concept of a "Russian World" is a notion that hardliners have used to justify intervening abroad to support Russian speakers, such as in parts of Ukraine. And, the new doctrine also justifies intervention abroad in support of Russian speakers and ethnic Russians outside of the country.

Why this policy?

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, a number of Eastern Bloc countries broke away from the USSR and became independent, but around 25 million ethnic Russians found themselves living outside Russia. West Slavs are in Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia, East Slavs are in Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, while South Slavs are in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Slovenia.

President Putin thinks of the collapse of the USSR as the "greatest geopolitical catastrophe" and has been highlighting, for years, what he sees as the tragic fate of those millions. It was one of his predecessors, Mikhail Gorbachev, who failed to prevent the break-up.

But till today, Moscow has continued to view the former Soviet lands, from the Baltics to Central Asia, as its legitimate sphere of influence - a notion strongly resisted by many of those countries as well as by the West. It is due to this reason that

THE RUSSIAN WORLD

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Russia's Concept for a 'Humanitarian' Policy Abroad

Russia's foreign policy has, in recent years, become more assertive than it had been in the first two decades since independence. The Kremlin surprised many with its 2008 war in Georgia, its 2014 seizure of Crimea and intervention in eastern Ukraine, and its 2015 deployment of forces in the Syrian civil war. Underpinning this greater assertiveness is a growing consensus among Russian analysts, scholars and officials that Russia should play a larger role in the world, one where Moscow is free to act according to its own interests.

Overview

The Concept consists of six sections:

- The first one covers general provisions.
- The second one is dedicated to Russian national interests in the humanitarian sphere abroad and presents objectives, tasks and principles of such policy.
- The third section lists key areas of the humanitarian policy abroad.
- The fourth section covers humanitarian cooperation with Russia in multilateral and bilateral formats.
- The fifth section is dedicated to inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue.
- The sixth section deals with forming and basic mechanisms for implementing the humanitarian policy abroad.

Features

Russia has long railed at the US and Europe for advancing the rights of minorities, and asserted the priority of collective social interests against liberal individualism. It outlawed same-sex marriage in the constitution last year and lawmakers are pushing for legislation that would tighten already stringent restrictions on the discussion of LGBTQ rights.

Putin has overseen sweeping domestic repression to crush political protest since his Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine sparked the biggest crisis in Europe since World War II, with thousands of people killed and millions forced to flee their homes. Within weeks of starting the war, he threatened to cleanse Russian society of "scum and traitors."

The new policy stated that Moscow should further deepen its ties with the self-styled Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic - two breakaway entities in eastern Ukraine, where the war continues to rage.

and also expansion of contacts between people," the Concept reads. According to the document, the humanitarian policy is an integral part of Russia's foreign policy. Among the Concept's tasks are protection, preservation and promotion of traditions and ideals inherent in the Russian world; strengthening of the role, importance and competitiveness of the Russian language in the modern world; increasing the competitiveness of domestic education, and others.

The document names Russian culture as the most important and integral part of world culture, as well as an instrument of soft power.

The new policy says the Russian Federation "provides support to its compatriots living abroad in the fulfilment of their rights, to ensure the protection of their interests and the preservation of their Russian cultural identity".

It said that Russia's ties with its compatriots abroad allowed it to "strengthen on the international stage its image as a democratic

country striving for the creating of a multi-polar world".

Key points

Russian cultural policy abroad will continue to describe Russia as a separate civilization, distinct from other regions and countries. Western states are described as the main threat to Russian culture and, therefore, Russian statehood. One implication of this line of reasoning is that cooperation between Russian and Western cultural and educational institutions will be inevitably limited.

A key task is to promote and defend the foundations of Russian "traditional values", in particular Russian family values, deemed to be



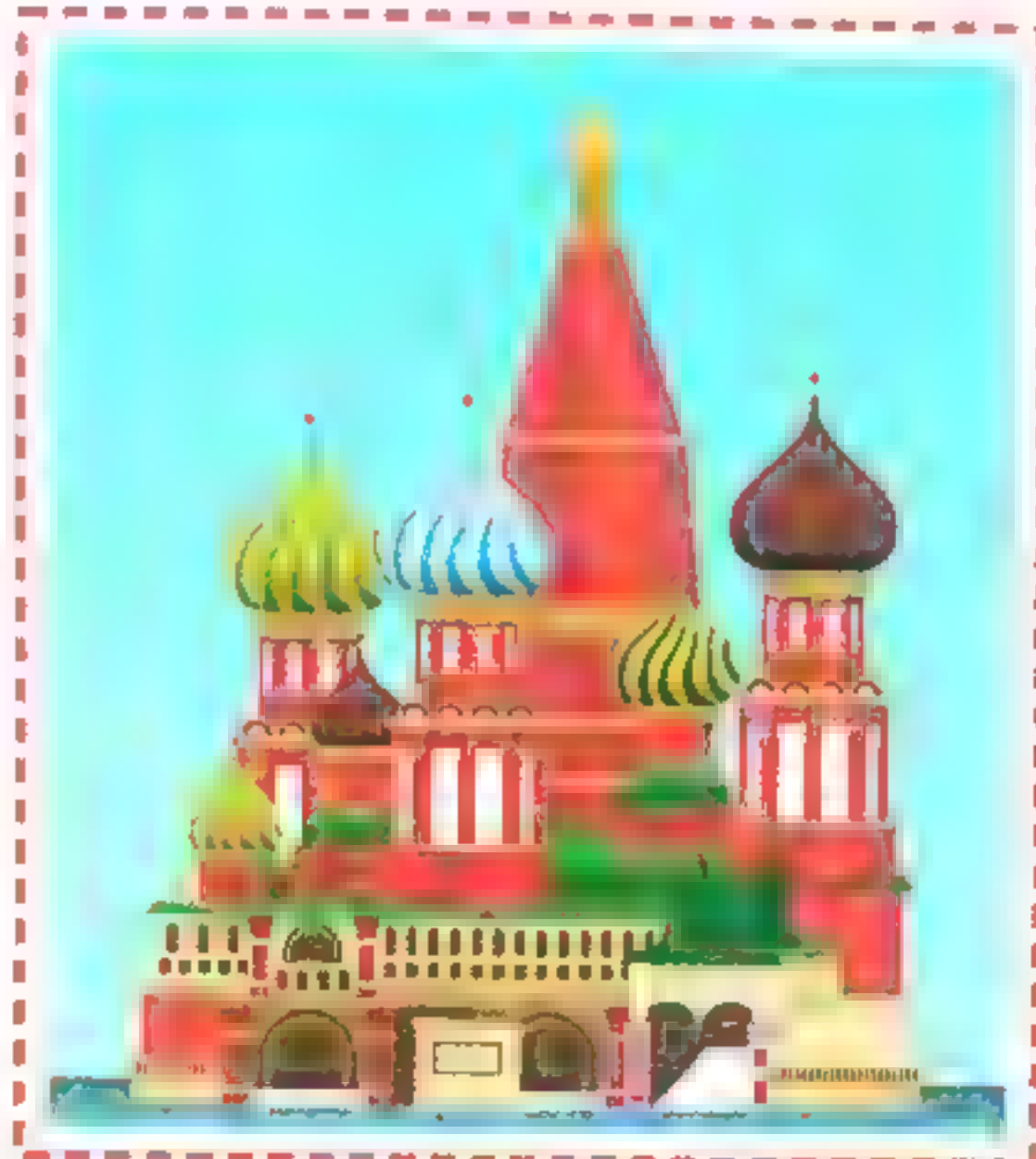
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It also said it should strengthen its links more with Abkhazia and Ossetia, two Georgian regions recognised as independent by Moscow after its war against Georgia in 2008.

The policy further states Russia should increase cooperation with Slavic nations, China and India, and further push its ties to the Middle East, Latin America and Africa.

"The goals of the Concept of Russia's Humanitarian Policy Abroad envisage formation and strengthening of the objective perception of our country in the world, promotion of understanding of Russia's historical path, role and place in world history and culture,

threatened by "neo-liberal governments" (i.e. the West). The document also promotes Russia's "constitutional identity" which characterizes Russia as a country legally steeped in "traditional spiritual-moral values," dedicated to the principles of "non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states". The document also singles out the Baltic states, Moldova and Georgia as places where Russian culture can



protect the rights of Russian-speaking groups. The broader Slavic region is also mentioned as one of strategic significance. Hence, engaging with diaspora groups in Europe and elsewhere remains a priority.

Foreign relations

The policy also calls for Russia to increase cooperation with Slavic nations, China, and India, as well as strengthen relations with nations in the Middle East, Latin America and Africa. "Developing friendly relations with China and India is one of the priorities of Russian foreign policy," says the Concept. A manifestation of this came in the form of Vostok-2022 war games that Russia hosted in coordination with China and that involved more than 50,000 troops and participation from several former Soviet nations, China, India, Laos, Mongolia, Nicaragua and Syria.

"Strengthening Russia's presence in the Asia-Pacific region (APR) is

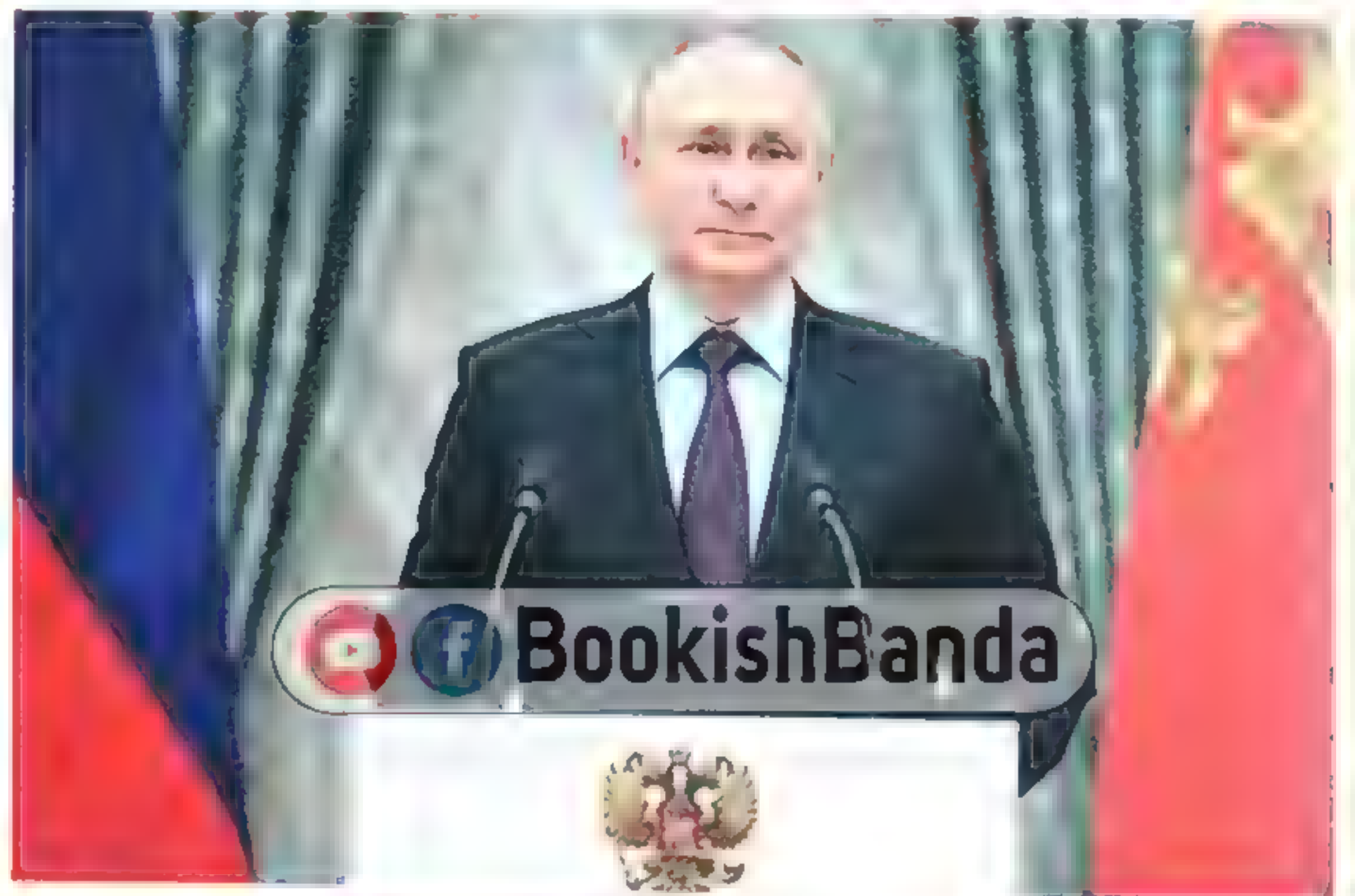
becoming increasingly important since Russia is an integral part of this fastest developing geopolitical zone, toward which the center of world economy and politics is gradually shifting. Russia is interested in participating actively in APR integration processes, using the possibilities offered by the APR to implement programs meant to boost Siberian and Far Eastern economy, creating a transparent and equitable security architecture in the APR and cooperation on a collective basis," says the Concept.

Analysis

First of all, it should be clear that the document does not represent a new foreign policy doctrine, although this was implied by several international media outlets. It should, thus, be assumed that the official foreign policy doctrine, adopted in 2016,

contradicted by the stated goal of promoting Russian culture and influence in the CIS region, including the areas of Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and the so-called republics of Donetsk and Luhansk.

In conclusion, Russia has produced a document on a narrow domain of foreign policy, or public diplomacy. It is long, repetitive and tedious, written in the style of thinking usually associated with Russia's Minister of Culture, Vladimir Medinsky. In many ways, the document also repeats - albeit in different words - core tenets of Soviet ideology: the idea of Russia as a unique civilization, a permanent conflict between Russia and the West, and the need for Russia to push back against hostile forces abroad. In this regard, the document confirms a profound continuity in Russian



remains in force. The document outlines the principles of a policy for promoting Russian culture abroad. The Concept claims that Russia will make a meaningful contribution to the stabilization of the situation in the Middle East and North Africa ... on the basis of respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity of states and non-interference in their internal affairs. However, the Russian doctrine of "non-interference" is immediately

foreign policy thinking.

In fine, this doctrine suggests a kind of soft-power strategy, the origin of which can be found in the official policy views of Russian politics and religion, which some hardliners use as justification for supporting pro-Russian secessionist factions in parts of Ukraine and the country's eastern regions. ■

The writer is a member of staff.

Italy shifts to the right

Far-right leader Giorgia Meloni has won Italy's general election, and is set to become Italy's first female Prime Minister, leading the most far-right government since Mussolini

The winning coalition

The results showed the conservative Coalition netting 44% of the votes, with Giorgia Meloni's Brothers of Italy party receiving around 26%, and populist leader Matteo Salvini's anti-immigrant League winning nearly 9% and more moderate Forza Italia of ex-Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi taking around 8%. With the majority vote, the alliance will have control of both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies.

Centre-left Democratic Party and allies had around 26%, while the 5-Star Movement — which received the most votes in the 2018 parliamentary elections — saw its share of the vote halved to about 15% this time around

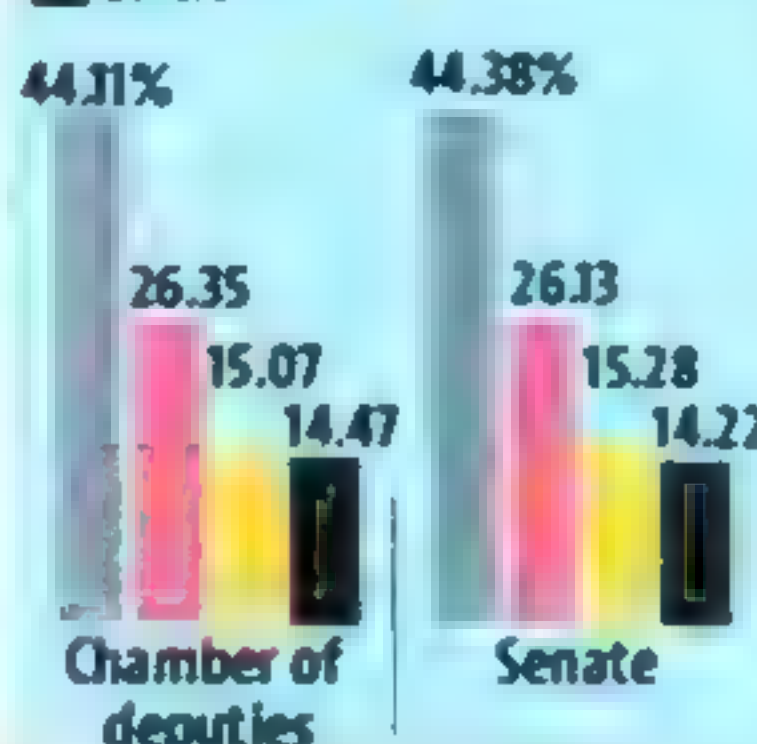
What's next?

The winning alliance needs a majority in both houses, which Meloni's coalition has. After this, Italian President Sergio Mattarella will nominate the next prime minister, who he believes has the support of the winning parties

Right and far right leading

Partial results with 95% of votes counted, in % of votes cast

Right and far-right alliance
Left alliance
5-star movement
Others



Policy differences

Italy has had almost 70 governments since 1946, and Salvini, Berlusconi and Meloni are not on the same page regarding policies. All three agree on government policies, including tax cuts and promises to cut mass migration. But, while Meloni supports sanctions against Russia, Salvini believes they hurt Italian industry, and Berlusconi believes "Putin was pushed to invent this special operation."

Challenges facing Meloni

Meloni's first order of business will be to create a budget to submit to the European Union and parliament

The budget is expected to allocate available funds to boost Italy's economic growth, while ensuring the tax cuts and pension reform promised during the campaign

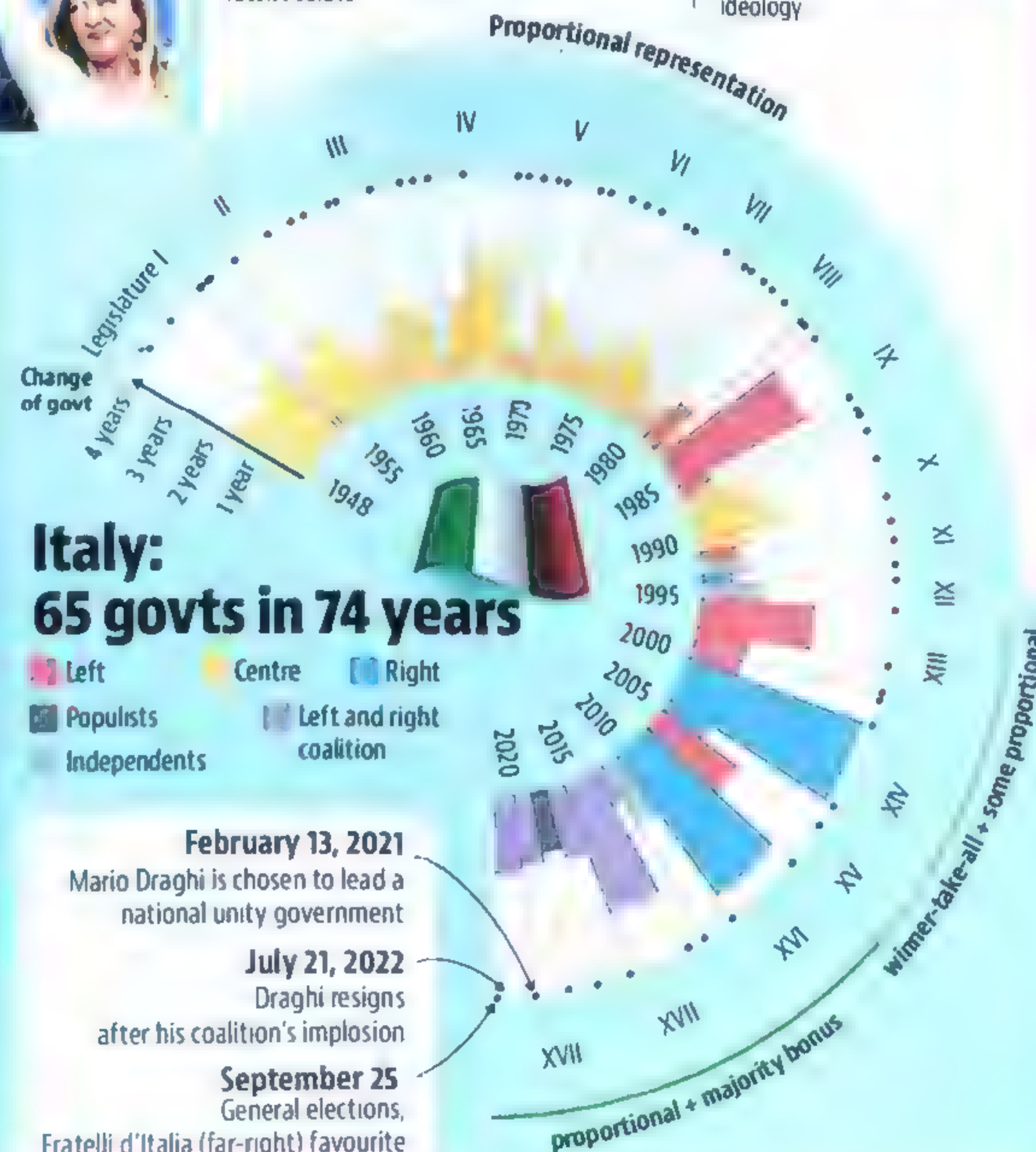
ITALY'S SWING TO THE RIGHT

A concern abroad

Unlike Germany, which went through a reckoning with its past, Italians simply live with theirs. Historians point out that Mussolini-era architecture and symbols exist everywhere, and while the Italian Constitution bars the reconstitution of the Fascist party, far-right groups still display the fascist salute

Desire for change in Italy

Experts say it is dissatisfaction with the present government rather than a surge in neo-fascist or far-right sentiment, as well as wanting something new that can overtake traditional political ideology



Who is Giorgia Meloni?

Meloni was the youngest minister in post-war Italian history at 31 and co-founded Brothers of Italy in 2012

Ties to the right

A teenage activist with the youth wing of Italy's neo-fascist movement, formed after World War II by supporters of late dictator Benito Mussolini, she had once said, "Mussolini was a good politician, in that everything he did, he did for Italy"

Campaign highlights

Running with "God, fatherland and family", Meloni ran her campaign against LGBT rights, and warned against Muslim migrants

"Italians have given us an important responsibility. It will now be our task not to disappoint them and do our utmost to restore dignity and pride to the Nation."



The US Indo-Pacific strategy clearly indicates America's policy shift from the Middle East towards Asia, mainly to contain the fast-rising China. In this backdrop, Russian invasion of Ukraine has complicated the whole scenario. Time will tell whether the United States is again dragged back into the region or not. For now, it seems highly unlikely.

The Middle East has been at the centre stage of world politics due to its strategic location and abounding natural resources. First, great powers like Great Britain, France and Russia

miserably as Iraq

Javed Solangi

the region was successfully managed through diplomacy or otherwise, e.g. military intervention as in the case of Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Regional order was mostly suitable for US interests in the region. Invasion of Iraq proved to be most consequential as the whole order was turned upside down. Before the US could realize, the monster was unleashed.

The region got mired in civil wars, sectarianism, conflicts, terrorism, extremism and, last but not least, intervention by foreign powers, i.e. Russia. Here is a brief sketch of balance of power in the region that has shifted from United States' hands.

Liberal project of building nation-states has failed is now, indubitably, a failed

had involvement in this region. Post-World War II era paved the way for a bipolar world order. At that time, Muslim population was the number one factor for consideration against the Soviet atheist ideology.

Second, huge reserves of hydrocarbons complemented the power equation for world domination.

Post-Cold War era saw the rise of the United States as the sole superpower of the world. This status and American exceptionalism made a perfect combo for doing whatever the US successive administrations wanted. Military-Industrial complex wanted new enemies for its client, i.e. NATO. "End of History" was cited as the ultimate triumph of liberal world order. Same liberal project was prescribed for the whole world and the US was to act as enforcer-in-chief for that.

Despite the emergence of theocratic Iran in the wake of the Revolution,



state in search of stability at best. Muqtada al-Sadr is emerging as a strong kingmaker as he wields a commanding authority over the country's Shiite population. Ostensibly, he wants freedom from Iran, but Sunni Arabs and leadership will never support a Shiite leader.

In Syria, Assad regime remains stronger than ever today as it is directly supported by Iran. Shiite minority rules Syrian Sunni majority. Assad regime survived machinations of Turkey, Qatar and the Gulf countries mainly abetted by United States. Hezbollah remains a dominant political force in Lebanon. Recently, Hezbollah resisted investigation of bombings that took place at the port storage. Yemen is another front where resilient Houthi rebels are not settling for their own territory, orchestrating attacks deep inside Saudi and UAE territories through drones. In Iran, hardliners got stronger in the face of "maximum pressure" campaign by the Trump administration. It did all but reversed gains achieved by the Iran nuclear deal.

Political vacuum, thus, was created mainly by US interventions. US withdrawal will just make the situation worse. Iran now retains an upper hand in the region but challenges are growing by the time. The United States is retreating but its protégé Israel is making inroads in the region. Israel has just to manipulate the Shiite-Sunni divide in the region. And it is doing just the same by normalizing relations with the countries considered enemies by Iran.

So far, Israel has normalised its relations with United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and openly but secretly with Saudi Arabia too. Close cooperation of these countries with India makes this assertion more credible.

Two events that are being considered responsible for the loss of US credibility in the region are cited here.

First, the US miserably failed in toppling the Assad regime in Syria despite having all-out support from Gulf States. Russian intervention in Syria was seen as weakness of once-mighty superpower, America.

Second, nuclear deal with Iran was seen as betrayal by Sunni Arabs. Trump administration

As president, I will stand up to the great human rights tests of our time – in China, Russia, and the Middle East. We must send a signal to our allies and adversaries that America is back in the leadership business.

Carly Fiorina

was sympathetic of this view. But now Biden administration wants diplomacy to prevail, that is, to play safe as before intervention in Iraq, etc.

Here comes Russia with its so-called "Special Military Operation" inside Ukraine. West sanctioned Russia but ultimately created problems for themselves. Economies which were battered already by the Covid-19 pandemic and global inflation, risked their own population as nearly half of their energy supplies come from Russia. This triggered President Joe Biden's recent visit to the Middle East. Although this visit was seen as a harbinger of Biden's cherished phrase "America is back," yet that is not the case. Inflation and hike in gas prices were the main domestic reasons that spurred Biden's visit. The US demand of increasing oil production was shrugged off easily.

Gulf countries are now deciding their matters on their own. They have also paid lip service for dialogue with Iran. But experts see it as an effort to buy time as Gulf countries are investing in colossal defence procurements. The upper hand of Iran in the Middle East will surely see a Sunni backlash in the region. Qatar, Turkey and Gulf countries supported anti-Shiite groups in the region, including Islamic State (IS).

If Israel is not successful in managing regional order like the US did before its Iraq intervention, flames can easily turn into uncontrollable inferno. Extremism, state collapse, wars over territory and resources and likely Iran-Israel standoff are few dangerous repercussions of leaving the Middle East in a political vacuum.

The United States has to play an active role in this region. Just relying on allies may not be enough. History offers some lessons too. Post-Cold War era abandoning of Mujahideen will be haunting the American administration as same monsters are knocking at the doors of Washington and New York. Someone has rightly said that the examination of our past is never time-wasting. Reverberations from the past provide learning rubrics for living today. ■

The writer has a master's degree in International Relations from University of Sargodha.



peace in Afghanistan

BookishBanda

A Mirage?

Mohammad Bissam

Introduction

Ever since the Taliban took over Kabul on August 15 last year, the world community has been concerned, and rightly so. However, those who were closely following the events occurring in Afghanistan saw the takeover coming a mile away. Nonetheless, the agility with which the Taliban captured territory after territory and finally Kabul, shocked everyone, because it was expected that the 300,000-strong Afghan National Army, which was assisted and funded by the United States, would not only put up a fight against the Taliban but will also push back and, at least, contain the insurgency to rural areas far from urban centres. Meanwhile the

There is a quote from the Spanish-American philosopher George Santayana that reads "Only the dead have seen the end of war." It seems to be the case in Afghanistan where war and famine have strangled the civilians. The war that started more than four decades ago has claimed millions of lives and terrorized generations of Afghans. Now, there is a serious necessity of humanitarian assistance in the country. The Taliban and the international community both must ensure the most basic human right: the right to live.

Taliban, carrying on the momentum, not only consolidated their hold over the captured areas but also conquered the Panjshir Valley, a stronghold of the revered freedom fighter Ahmad Shah Massoud whose son Ahmad Massoud was leading the resistance against Taliban. Nevertheless, with the Taliban striking a deal with the United States in Doha in 2020, it was an awkward situation for the Ashraf Ghani-led government because US negotiated the withdrawal of its troops from Afghanistan in accordance with the Doha peace deal (facilitated by Pakistan), without taking the Ghani government on board. And the chaos that followed the US withdrawal left the Afghan

civilians fearing for their safety because of the absence of any formal government following the collapse of Afghan government after President Ashraf Ghani's flight from Kabul, allegedly with millions of dollars in cash.

But not everything about the recent crisis is new. The instability in Afghanistan has been lingering on for decades now.

Background

The instability in Afghanistan can be traced back to when King Mohammed Zahir Shah was overthrown by Mohammed Daoud Khan in 1973 who then became president of the newly-declared republic. In 1978, he, too, was assassinated in a coup that brought Nur Muhammad Taraki of PDPA (People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan) into power. However, his rule was short-lived as he was killed in September 1979 resulting in Hafizullah Amin taking over the reins of the government. This power struggle had already turned violent with ordinary civilians suffering from unrest, following which, the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) invaded Afghanistan in December 1979. During this invasion, President Hafizullah Amin was killed and Babrak Karmal became the president.

Soviet Invasion

As the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan prolonged, the people here launched a freedom struggle against the USSR, because it is against their traditions to accept foreign occupation of their land. In the said struggle, the freedom fighters (alternatively called Mujahideen) enjoyed active support in terms of arms, ammunition and funding from various countries including the United States, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. This support allowed them to inflict huge losses on Soviet troops in terms of lives and equipment. The tide of war shifted towards the Mujahideen when, in 1986, the same year Babrak Karmal was replaced by Dr Najibullah as president, they were provided with the Stinger Missiles by the US. As the decade approached its

end, it became increasingly difficult for the USSR to continue and sustain its occupation of Afghanistan. In 1988, Geneva Accords Agreement paved the way for withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan.

On February 15, 1989, the soviet army completed its withdrawal. This marked the end of Soviet occupation of Afghanistan after more than nine years of invasion.

Civil War

After the Soviet withdrawal, the Mujahideen split into various factions led by different commanders and chiefs, including the likes of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Burhanuddin Rabbani and

Ahmad Shah Massoud who had fought against USSR. Now, with the

weakening government of Dr Najib, the internecine war was inevitable which brought the Mujahideen factions at odds with Dr Najib's government as well as with each other. This infighting further deteriorated the security situation in Afghanistan. In April 1992, Dr Najibullah resigned and Northern Alliance (the faction led by Ahmed Shah Massoud) took over the capital, Kabul.

The nine-year-long war against USSR, and the civil war that followed, took its toll on the Afghan civilians who were compelled to leave their homes and seek shelter and refuge in neighbouring countries, mainly Pakistan, which is home to more than three million Afghan refugees.

Emergence of Taliban

During the scramble for Kabul, the Mujahideen factions were engaged in a civil war. These factions started to lose control over their territories especially in rural areas, where local warlords and chieftains gained control. Meanwhile, along the Durand Line, on both sides of the Pak-Afghan border, there were Madrassahs (religious schools) from where emerged the Taliban. They first established their control over Kanda-har. In 1996,

Taliban captured Kabul and established their version of Shariah (Islamic Law) in most of Afghanistan. Their rule was characterized by the absence of most civil rights



and liberties. They ruled Afghanistan till the US invasion in 2001.

America's War on Terror

The US right after the 9/11 terror attacks ascertained that Osama bin Laden, or OBL, was behind those coordinated attacks. And since because the Taliban were not handing him over, US launched a full-scale invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001. The Taliban regime was ousted and most of their leadership went into hiding. US spent two decades (even after having eliminated OBL in 2011) in establishing a system that suited their interests rather than eliminating terrorism and primarily going after terror outfits operating from within Afghanistan. This is evident from the fact that even after years of instability and war, peace is nowhere to be found. The US supported and funded the Afghan National Army that laid down arms without putting up a fight. The reason was not because the army was incapable or the soldiers were afraid to fight. Afghans

Taliban insurgents and Al Qaeda terrorists to flee the hill and cross the border into Pakistan, where there were several of valleys for them to hide in. They were able to cross the Durand Line given that there was virtually no mechanism for the security forces to distinguish between (potential) terrorists and innocent civilians (refugees). This scenario coupled with lack of security checkpoints on highways in the border areas on the Afghan side emboldened the insurgents and terrorists along with civilians to enter Pakistan unchecked. Many of them considering Pakistan a US ally (which it was) declared war on Pakistan for supporting the United States. These terrorists found sympathisers in Pakistan as well. Several terrorist factions under the umbrella of TTP (Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan) started operating. The decade following the 9/11 terror attacks saw an exponential increase in terrorist activities across the country in which major military installations, including the GHQ, as well as



are one of the bravest people. The reason ANA surrendered to the Taliban was because there was nothing left for them to fight for. They had lost their faith in the system that was corrupt to the core. Meanwhile, the Taliban, an indigenous insurgency, used to carry out guerrilla attacks on American and Afghan soldiers. The US army and ANA had a tough time locating and eliminating their hideouts given the rugged and mountainous terrain of Afghanistan. This war proved costly to the US which had poured more than two trillion dollars into Afghanistan to sustain a crumbling system. Adding insult to injury, terrorism was rampant due to the presence of terrorist organizations such as ISIS and TTP in Afghanistan as the US was negotiating its withdrawal from Afghanistan with the Taliban.

High stakes for Pakistan

As America's Operation Enduring Freedom gained momentum, the airstrikes on Tora Bora hills forced the

civilian targets were attacked. They attacked civilians, military personnel, law-enforcement agencies (LEAs), educational institutes, public parks, pretty much anywhere. They got lucky enough to evade the security forces or where there was a lapse in security measures. The attacks were indiscriminate whose objectives were to create panic and chaos in the country in order to pressurize the government into accepting and recognizing the horrific crimes they had been committing in the name of Shariah (Islamic Law) even though they had nothing to do with Islamic Law or Islam or Law. They had established a system, in areas under their control, parallel to that of the state of Pakistan. They had become a serious threat to the sovereignty of Pakistan.

This was the background against which the government launched large-scale military operations (after several peace agreements having been dishonoured by the militant groups) in order to thwart the onslaught of

terrorist attacks.

These operations were an array of offensives against the militant groups in which their hideouts were targeted through airstrikes followed by ground assault. Most of the groups were based in populated areas across the erstwhile FATA. A lot of civilians had to be relocated during these operations. These internally displaced persons (IDPs) are still being rehabilitated years after completion of military operations and clearance of their areas.

Pakistan had to bear a loss of more than eighty thousand lives in the war against terrorism. As the government in Afghanistan, aided by United States, was unable to control the militants owing to the instability and lack of control on their territory, terror outfits based in Afghanistan orchestrated thousands of attacks across Pakistan. Pakistan had to reorganize and revamp its military on a large scale in order to meet the growing challenges and countering the threat posed by terrorism. Thanks to the 1500-mile Pak-Afghan international border, the presence of terrorist organizations on either side of the border means terrorism in the whole region as is the case here. Due to extensive military operations undertaken by Pakistan, in which we lost thousands of our officers, men and civilians, there is no room for any terrorist organization to execute their evil designs. Now, their rat-holes are being destroyed through various Intelligence-based-Operations (IBOs). On the contrary, in Afghanistan, the coalition forces had pretty much all of Afghanistan under their control but this control could not be translated into stability. The terrorist outfits kept, and still are, operating from inside Afghanistan and spreading terrorism in the whole region especially Pakistan which, as stated earlier, shares a 1500-mile border with Afghanistan. The presence of these terrorists on Afghan soil indicates a great threat to Pakistan owing to which Pakistan

undertook a massive project to fence the border with an aim to enhance border surveillance.

As the situation in Afghanistan directly affects Pakistan, the latter has remained a major stakeholder in the Afghan peace process. Pakistan would be the prime beneficiary of stability in Afghanistan after the Afghan people.

Therefore, it has been advocating for peace for a long time because a stable Afghanistan would mean a great deal of trade and transit through the war-ravaged country. Pakistan was the prime facilitator of the Doha peace deal between US and the Taliban.

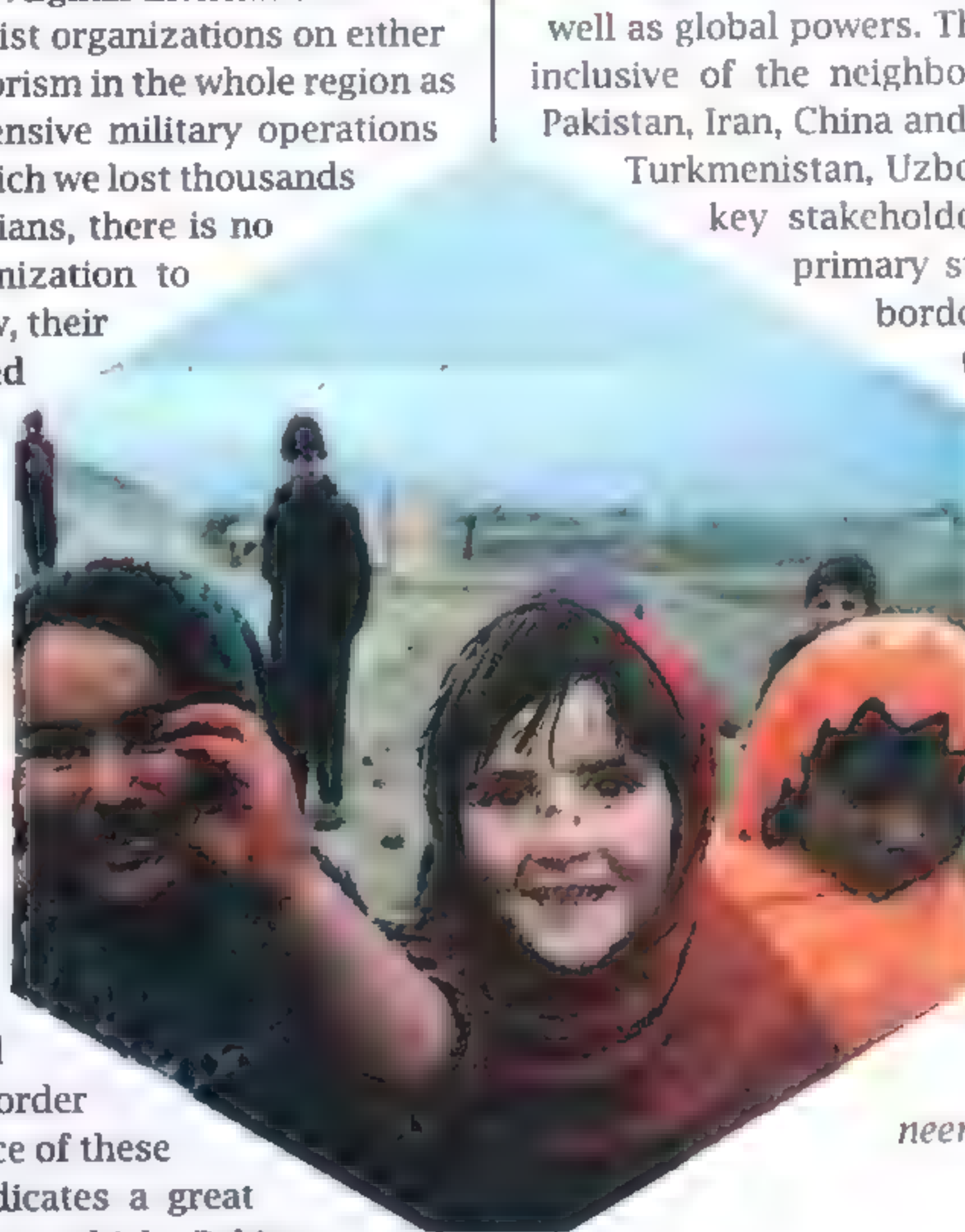
Conclusion

After more than four decades of war, Afghanistan is facing an unprecedented crisis in terms of security situation and food shortages in addition to the already rampant corruption and subsequently plummeting civil and social services.

The international community and the Taliban bear the responsibility for a peaceful and stable Afghanistan. The Taliban are seeking recognition of their regime, which lies with the regional countries as well as global powers. The regional countries which are inclusive of the neighbours of Afghanistan (including Pakistan, Iran, China and some Central-Asian states like Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan), are the key stakeholders in the peace process. The

primary stake of these countries will be border security and mitigation of terrorism in the region and beyond, but in the meantime, they must not forget about the Afghan civilians who have been most adversely affected by this instability. This is the least these stakeholders can do to alleviate their suffering. In years to come, a stable Afghanistan will contribute pragmatically to the global fight against terrorism. ■

The writer is a student at the Department of Electrical Engineering in University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Lahore.

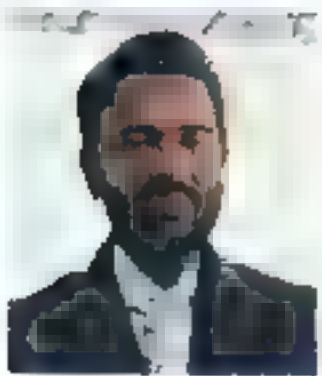




It was back in June 1992, when Heads of State from 178 countries assembled in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to adopt Agenda 21 that pledged the shelter of humanity and the broader habitat around it. Later, on the eve of new millennium, a set of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was adopted and the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger was prioritized as the loftiest goal. The Johannesburg Declaration of 2002 re-asserted the faith in MDGs. But the impediments and delays compelled leaders from around the world to gather again in Rio de Janeiro in 2012 to make still another set of promises ultimately culminating in seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit of September 2015. And passably enough, "No poverty" and "Zero Hunger" were given the top priority on the list again.

Poverty Eradication is a distant dream

Arif Ashraf Kamboh



Despite all the efforts mentioned above, we have not just miserably failed in curbing poverty in any of its forms or achieving food security and ending hunger; we have also shoved the masses, who were already struggling against destitution, into deeper chasms of impoverishment and famine. The latest report of SDGs made public in 2022, estimates that while in 2019, some 641 million people lived below the income of 1.90 dollars a day, the year 2021 witnessed the numbers soaring to 684 million.

A similar report on the second SDG of Zero Hunger finds that about one in 10 people worldwide are suffering from hunger and nearly one in three people lack regular access to adequate food. Almost half the countries in the world have suffered from soaring food prices in 2020 and 149 million children under age 5 still suffer from stunting. In addition to this, the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2021 reaffirms the bleak situation mentioned above. The GHI states that Central Africa faced "alarming" and South Asia "serious" hunger with scores of 43 and 24.7, respectively. And in a rank-wise study of 116 countries, Central Africa was ranked 114, while Pakistan, India and Afghanistan

were ranked 92, 101 and 103, respectively. According to a report by the United Nations on food security, the Earth produces more food than is required to feed everyone. Still some 815 million people around the world face starvation, the highest figure being from Asia.

Unfortunately, poverty and food shortages cannot be studied in isolation, since almost every natural or manmade disaster exacerbates the severity of the food crisis. The Covid-19 pandemic, for instance, pushed some 90 million people in the Asia-Pacific region into extreme poverty, estimated in a report titled "Building Forward Together: Towards an Inclusive and Resilient Asia and the Pacific," jointly released by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP). The World Bank, in one of its reports, states that the rate of poverty around the globe was on the decline with consistency for the last 25 years till the disruption caused by Covid-19 eclipsed everything. The report suggests that over 150 million people live on less than 3.2 dollars per day, and are prone to fall into the chasm of extreme poverty. This impact becomes worse when multidimensional poverty is considered. Covid-19

added an alarming 245 million people to the already soaring figures of 1.3 billion multidimensional poor in the Asia-Pacific region, reversing the poverty alleviation figures back to, at least, nine years. The World Bank reported similar effects in Pakistan where economic progress remained below par, averaging 1.3 percent for the financial years 2021 and 2022.

In addition to the above argument, as the Global Network's 2022 global report on food crisis suggests, clashes and wars are significant drivers of food shortage worldwide. The Ukraine crisis – taking a manmade crisis as an instance in this argument – too has triggered food shortages for the poorest people in the world. Ukraine and the Russian Federation are responsible jointly for 30 percent of global exports of wheat and 20 percent of those of maize. While 47 million people have already suffered from a shortage of wheat worldwide, the Russia-Ukraine war and the resulting sanctions – by US, EU, G7 and others – on Russia have exacerbated the situation, which would push the world further away from achieving the zero hunger targets set in the SDGs.

Pakistan, an impoverished nation facing food shortage crisis up to an existential level, is the third largest importer of wheat from Ukraine. Pakistan imported 60 percent of its wheat consumed in 2020-2021, thus signifying the importance of the Ukraine-Russia war on food security in Pakistan. In addition to this, the effect of the current flash floods in Pakistan on food security knows no bounds. While the failure of government is already crystal clear concerning relief efforts, and figures of deaths due to half of the state land being flooded keep on pouring in, the real impact is yet to be estimated in terms of millions of people being pushed below the poverty line and even more starving and suffering from acute food shortage. We were already performing below par in terms of food security. Sindh and Balochistan, for instance, were facing “high food insecurity”, IPC's Acute Food Insecurity Analysis 2021-2022 asserts. The reasons include, but are not limited to, the increasing intensity of recurring heatwaves in the region, high food and fuel prices, and epidemics and the pandemic of Covid-19. And lately, since the floods have done more than destroying the crops and livestock, it will only aggravate existing food insecurity and dietary challenges; thus, worsening the already bleak conditions of malnutrition, under-nutrition, and starvation levels in Pakistan. Since this flood in its scale has already surpassed the super floods of 2010, it will likely destroy the opportunities for agriculture for at least a year. Since the lower terrains of Sindh and Balochistan are still under water, while growing times for Rabi season are already on the horizon, this impact shall, via damage to the major

crop of cotton, will impact textiles, thereby disrupting the already struggling national economy.

Thus, poverty and food crisis are dilemmas that get worse with each passing day, since they are interconnected to and exacerbated by almost all natural and manmade disasters. Hence, we cannot end hunger unless the issues that undermine food security are addressed. This makes it imperative to reserve a certain percentage of disaster rehabilitation or resilience funds, for instance, climate change resilience fund; for a sustained nutritional strategy. The governmental, as well as inter-governmental response towards poverty and malnutrition eradication strategies, cannot be ‘one size fits all’ type of solution. The first two SDGs have to be part and parcel of the national food policies of every country. Then, a multi-sectorial strategy that is customized according to the terrain, level of impact and stage of required intervention is inevitable, and that too with the cooperation of both private and public sectors. The strategy should not only look for timely relief to the food-impovertised masses, but long-term nutritional support is also equally imperative. There needs to be a universal charter regarding exports of staple

crops and even if the global body has to resort to sanctions, it should compensate for the losses incurred in the supply of crops like wheat, at least to those who are affected by the supply and price crises.

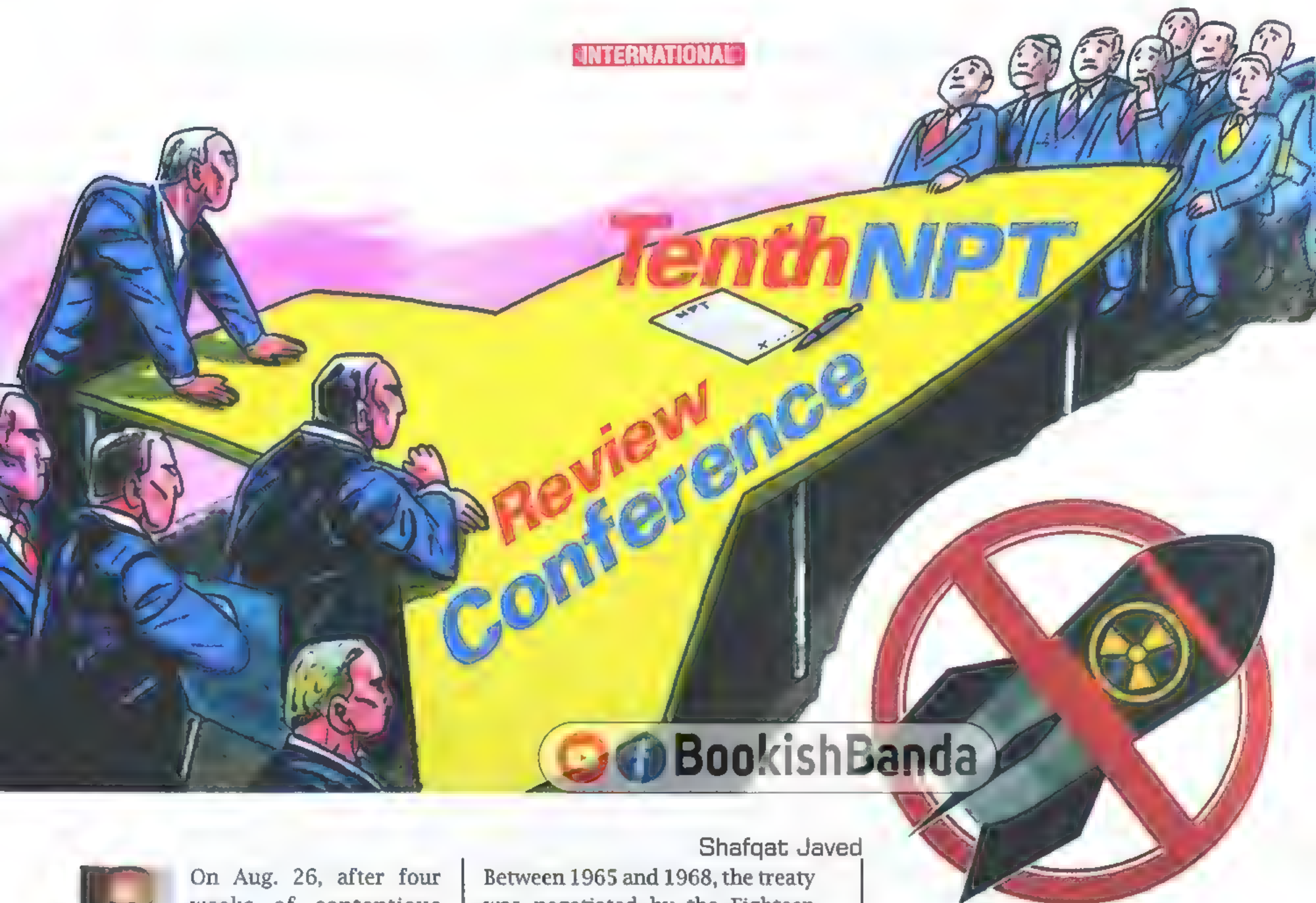
In addition to this, while new technology needs to be introduced in agriculture, it is imperative that patterns of production, as well as consumption, be re-assessed. We have to invest in sustainable agricultural development. Global targets set by the United Nations as well as the

efforts put therein need to be redefined; for instance, as suggested by the annual SDG report 2021, to reduce stunting in children by 50 percent by 2030, the annual rate of decline has to increase two folds, i.e. 2.1 percent to 3.9 percent per year. Above all, it requires human intervention. It is a strategy by humans and for humans, as go the words of Nelson Mandela that “Poverty is not an accident. Like slavery and apartheid, it is manmade and can be removed by the actions of human beings.

The United Nations celebrates international day for the eradication of poverty on October 17th each year. The global body, despite all the loopholes mentioned so far, tries to sensitize the indifferent masses toward the deprived and starving humanity. We must not forget that saving humanity from starvation is not possible without the leadership of the strong and the engagement of all. This October 17th, the world has to reaffirm its commitment to ending this vicious cycle of persistent poverty while still maintaining respect for people and the planet we are living on. ■

The writer is a qualifier of several competitive exams including PCS 2013, PCS 2019 and CSS 2020, and scores of general recruitment. He is, presently, under training at Directorate General of Training and Research, Lahore.





Shafqat Javed



On Aug. 26, after four weeks of contentious negotiations, the 10th Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) ended without reaching agreement on substantive conclusions and recommendations due to Russia's opposition to a summary document presented by the Conference President Gustavo Zlauvinen of Argentina. In particular, Russia objected to a clause about control over the Zaporizhzhia power plant, and its delegate suggested other countries had also voiced concerns about the draft outcome document.

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is an international treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and their technology to foster the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to further the goal of disarmament.

Between 1965 and 1968, the treaty was negotiated by the Eighteen Nation Committee on Disarmament, a United Nations-sponsored organization based in Geneva, Switzerland.

Opened for signature on 1 July 1968 – and entered into force on 5 March 1970, the treaty has, at present, 191 member states.

It is essentially a bargain between the recognised Nuclear Weapons States and the states not possessing nuclear weapons. Nuclear-weapon states parties under the NPT are defined as those that manufactured and exploded a nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive devices before 1st January 1967.

The three 'Pillars' of NPT are:

1. That all states-parties commit to pursue general and complete disarmament.
2. That no non-nuclear-weapons state develops or acquires nuclear weapons
3. That all state-parties which wish to can access and develop nuclear technology for peaceful applications

(such as generating electricity or for medical applications).

It requires countries to give up any present or future plans to build nuclear weapons in return for access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Of its sub-clauses, Article VI requires each party to "undertake to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control". But none of the Nuclear Weapons States have acted adequately on their required 'good faith', so widespread disillusion has led to a new treaty – the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, or the Nuclear Ban Treaty – which offers a pragmatic solution to the threats posed by nuclear war on all humanity: it was

NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY:



- ☑ What : Only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty for disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States.
- ☑ Objective :
 - ☑ To prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology,
 - ☑ To promote cooperation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy
- ☑ Signed in 1968 and entered into force in 1970.
- ☑ Member states: 190
- ☑ 4 non-signatories UN member states: India, Israel, and Pakistan, South Sudan,

ratified in January 2021 and now has 66 state-parties, all of which are non-nuclear-weapon states.

It represents the only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States.

Pakistan is not a member of NPT.

The 10th Review Conference

The NPT review conferences play an important role in analyzing and assessing the implementation and results of the agreement and charting the course of action over the next five years. Twenty-five years after its entry into force, the decision to extend the NPT indefinitely was taken at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference. The 10th Review Conference follows the one in 2015 that ended without consensus on adopting a key outcome over the next five years. The 2010 Review Conference was the last time NPT state parties successfully adopted an outcome document that identified conclusions and recommendations for activities such as the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.

Concerns after Russia's disagreement

The occupation of the Zaporizhzhia

nuclear plant in southeastern Ukraine as well as the takeover of the Chernobyl nuclear plant, scene of the world's worst nuclear disaster in 1986, renewed global fears of another nuclear emergency.

The threat of nuclear weapons use



today is higher than at any time since the heights of the Cold War and the deteriorated international security environment.

This NPT conference represents a missed opportunity to strengthen the treaty and global security by agreeing to a specific action plan with benchmarks and timeframes to effectively address the growing dangers of nuclear arms racing and nuclear weapons use.

What member countries say?

Many other states expressed disappointment about the lack of ambition, especially in the forward-looking section of the draft outcome document presented by the Conference President, but did not wish to block adoption. On the final day of the conference, Aug. 26, almost 50 states delivered statements until nearly midnight to convey their reactions. Russia, the sole state to oppose consensus, did so because of its "objections on key points which have a political dimension and are known to all." The Russian delegation also deemed comments made throughout the conference to be "anti-Russian, politicized, unjustified and misleading on the situation in Ukraine."

Pakistan's position on nuclear non-proliferation

Pakistan is a strong supporter of multilateralism and continues to play a leading role for international peace and security. Pakistan considers that peace and stability can only be ensured through a strong non-discriminatory rules-based international order. A robust non-proliferation regime is the central pillar of such a rules-based order. Therefore, Pakistan stands committed to the objectives of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament for the benefit of all humankind.

After 1974, when the first nuclear test was conducted in our neighborhood, Pakistan made several proposals for keeping South Asia free of nuclear weapons and



missiles. These included simultaneous application of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards on all nuclear facilities and bilateral arrangement for their reciprocal inspections; simultaneous accession to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT); regional CTBT; Zero Missile Regime in South Asia; and signing of a Non-Aggression Pact. Unfortunately, none of these proposals met a favorable response. Pakistan was not the first to introduce nuclear weapons in South Asia. It was forced to develop nuclear capability for self-defence. After 1998, Pakistan proposed the establishment of a Strategic Restraint Regime (SRR) in South Asia. The SRR is premised on three interlocking and mutually reinforcing elements of conflict resolution, nuclear and missile restraint and conventional balance. If taken up in earnest, this proposal can lay the foundation of lasting peace and stability in the region. "Pakistan will continue to contribute towards achieving non-proliferation objectives on an equal footing as a partner of the international community. We seek a non-discriminatory global regime on non-proliferation that is principle-based, inclusive and underpinned by the

cardinal principle of equal and undiminished security for all states. Genuine progress on disarmament necessitates a conducive regional and global security environment as well as the resolution of long-standing disputes and conflicts," says the country Foreign Office.

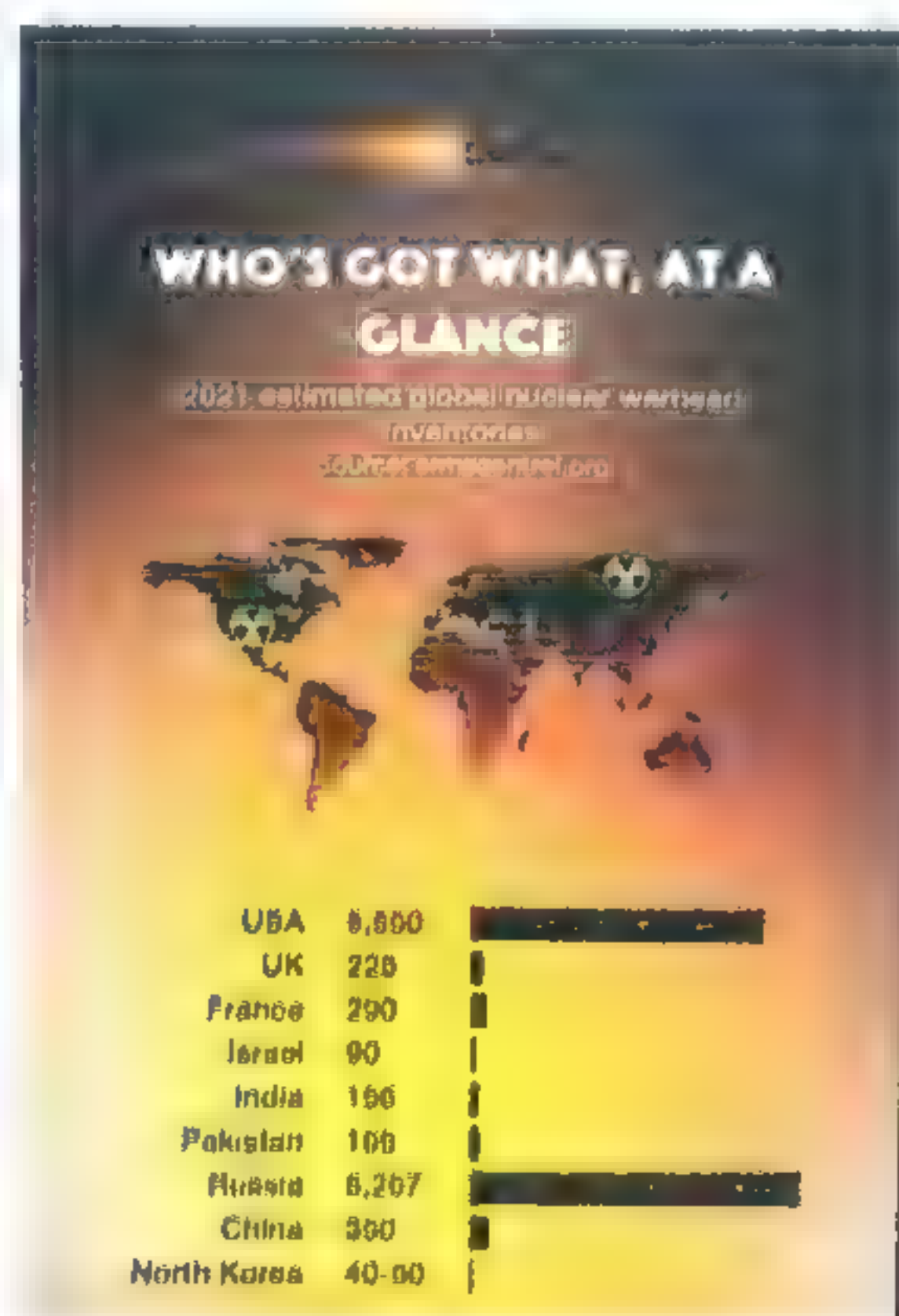
Future of NPT

The future credibility of the treaty rests on its full implementation. NPT is currently facing numerous challenges, which entail the issue of non-proliferation and disarmament to its failure to integrate the three

nuclear weapon states into its fold which are Pakistan, India and Israel. Despite possessing nuclear arsenals of comparable size, there are slim chances for India and Pakistan to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in the near future. Security experts in both countries believe that the Treaty was "discriminatory". The NPT has not been able to bring nuclear weapon states to one table, without discrimination; hence, it is becoming increasingly difficult to universalize the non-proliferation norms.

Though NPT has been credited with successfully preventing the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons, it has numerous loopholes. So far, it has been unable to make any progress towards disarmament, which is the crucial element of the treaty. The existing limitations in the treaty and the further emergent challenges make the future of NPT very bleak. If such challenges persist, they could threaten the very existence of NPT. Hence, in order to keep the NPT mounting, and for the maintenance of its sanctity, it is imperative to address the challenges and advance with the non-discriminatory approach. ■

The writer is a member of staff.





The Future of Commonwealth

Author: King Charles III

  **BookishBanda**

Magazine Desk

Queen Elizabeth II was not just Britain's head of state. She was an integral part of how a country found its lost destiny. The empire was already in decline when the late queen became monarch, but the United Kingdom still had 70 overseas territories and was basking in the afterglow of its moral and military triumph in the Second World War. The coronation was a globally significant event, its golden flummery an enactment of the kind of nation Britain thought it was. Monarchy was presented as hierarchy's human face.

But history dispelled the illusion of timeless continuity through ceremonial ritual. With revolts brewing in almost every imperial possession, Britain's global footprint shrank. When Hong Kong was transferred to China in 1997, the Prince of Wales thought it the "end of the empire". A myth arose that Britain had voluntarily decided to transform its colonies into a commonwealth. Having been cruelly exploited for decades, British colonies became independent republics with indecent haste. Today, there are only 15 realms with the monarch as head of state. That number is set to fall: Barbados became a republic last year, with Jamaica likely to follow - and even perhaps Australia.

The Commonwealth, with the Queen as its head, was a club designed as a destination for countries parachuting out of British rule. The monarch cultivated warm personal relations with many Commonwealth leaders to keep the group together. Whether King Charles III can carry on his mother's legacy is another question. He succeeded her as head - though the position is not hereditary and he lacks his mother's star-power as the longest reigning monarch in the modern age. Her commitment to the post-imperial club was such that in 1986, when a boycott of the Commonwealth Games was threatened


by countries that disapproved of Margaret Thatcher's opposition to economic sanctions against South Africa, Buckingham Palace briefed against Downing Street.

The monarchy has been involved in skirmishes with the government - but a post-Brexit executive, pumped up on its own power, has brushed off its interventions. King Charles attempted this year to push back against the disgraceful policy of deporting asylum-seekers to Rwanda and his son criticised the Windrush scandal, which saw hundreds of Commonwealth citizens wrongly detained and deported.

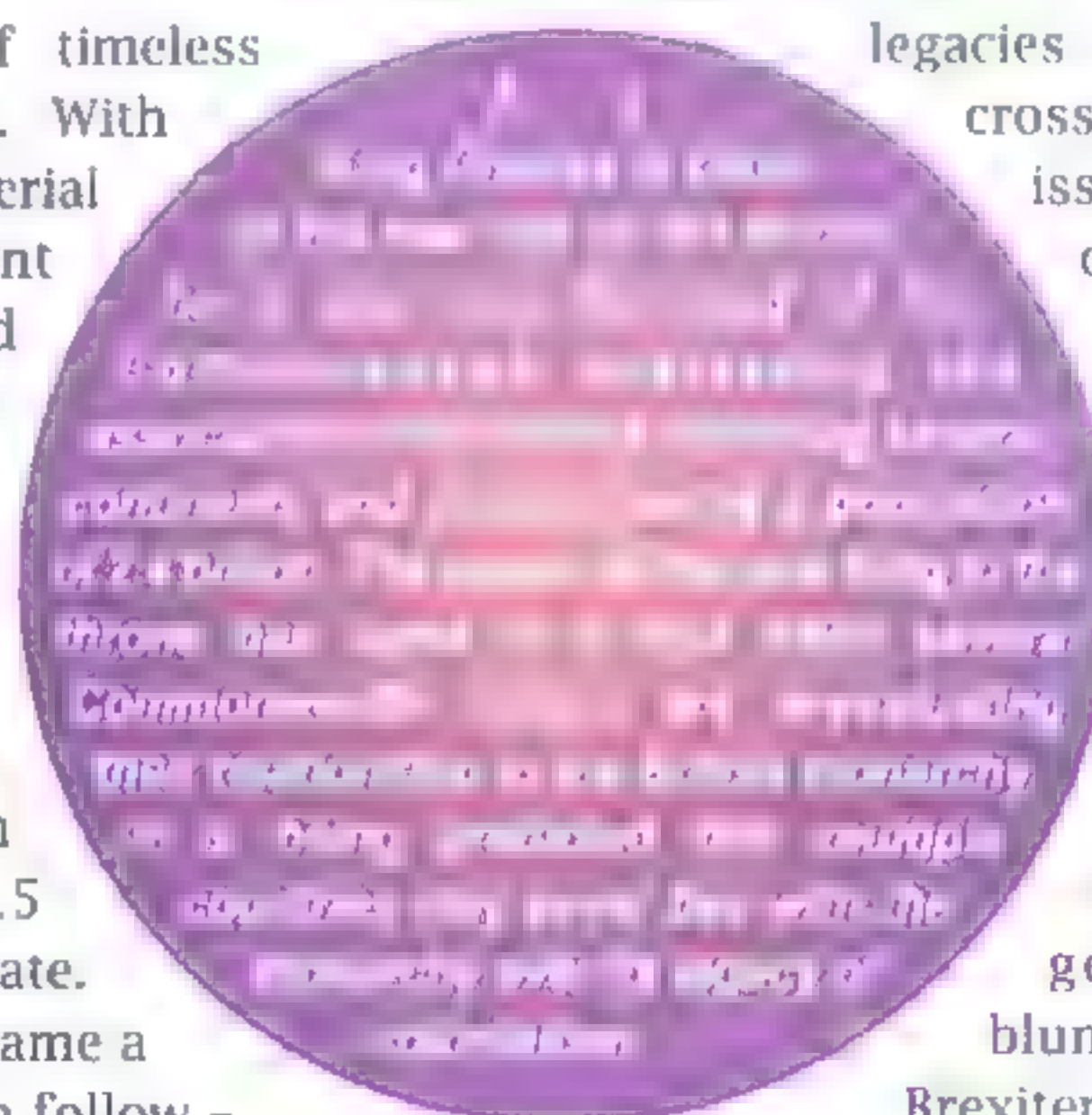
Both monarch and heir have acknowledged the harm and legacies of slavery. But both stopped short of crossing swords with the government by issuing an apology for it - for fear, probably, of opening a door to reparations. A monarch should not meddle in politics, even for the right reasons.

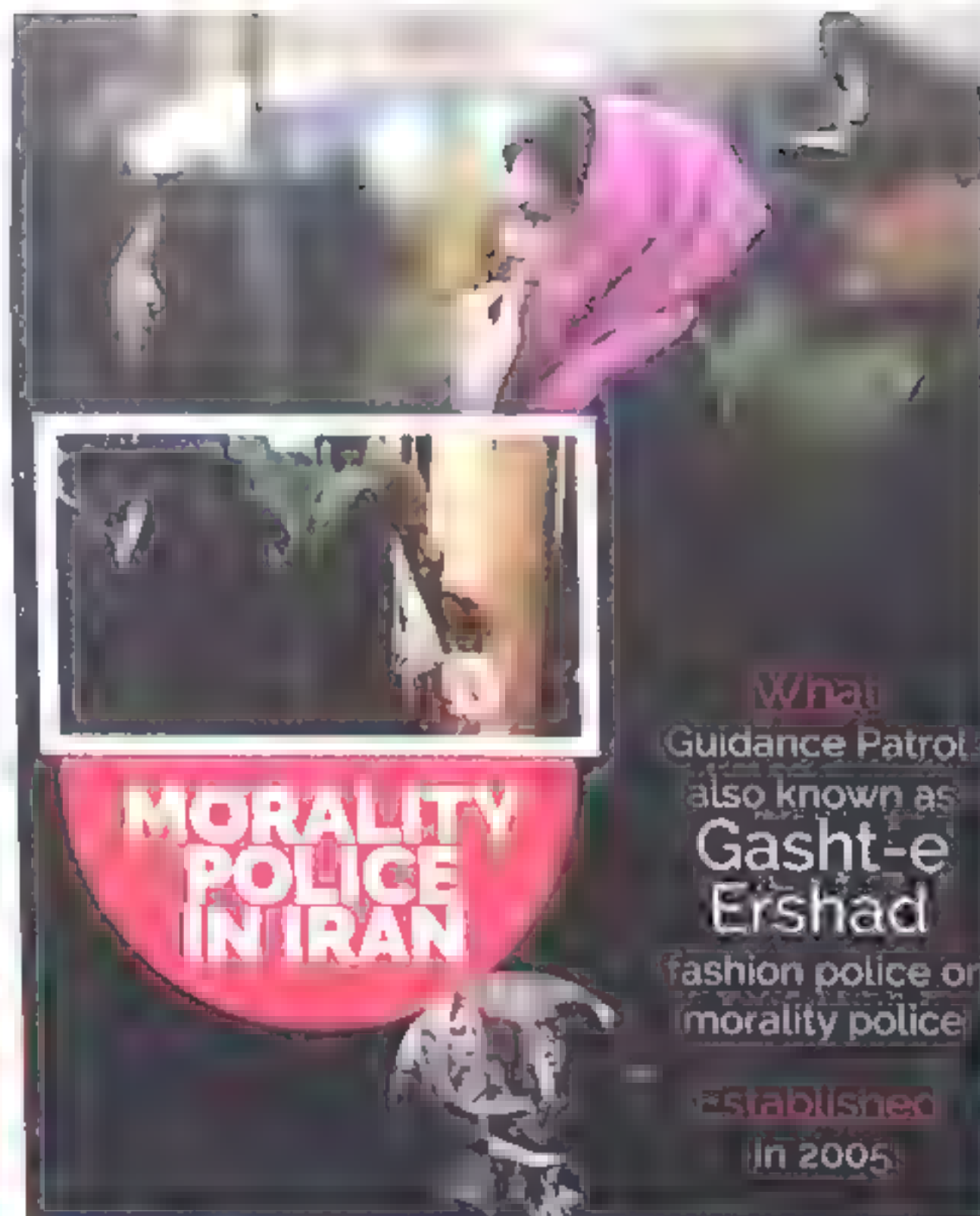
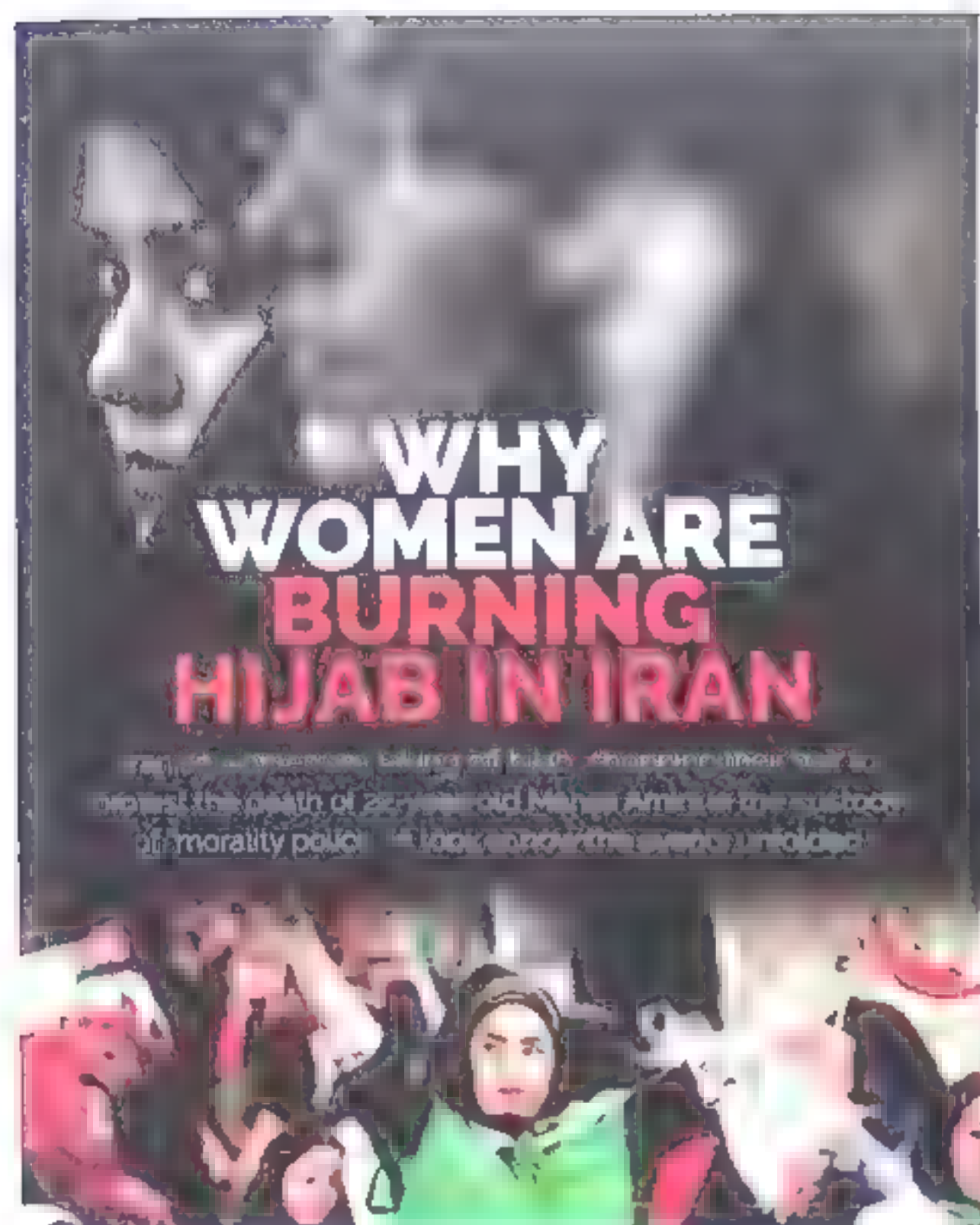
This also exposes the weakness of the Commonwealth. Its head has been unable to move politics in a progressive direction in the UK, let alone anywhere else. The post-imperial delusion of British political life was exposed when Boris Johnson failed to oust the secretary general of the Commonwealth. A blundering, colonial mentality undergirds Brexiters' delusion that the post-imperial club of nations could be an alternative to the European Union.

The Commonwealth has received more royal attention than the EU - in part because it offered a global stage that justified the pomp and scale of the crown - but both remain unloved in Britain.

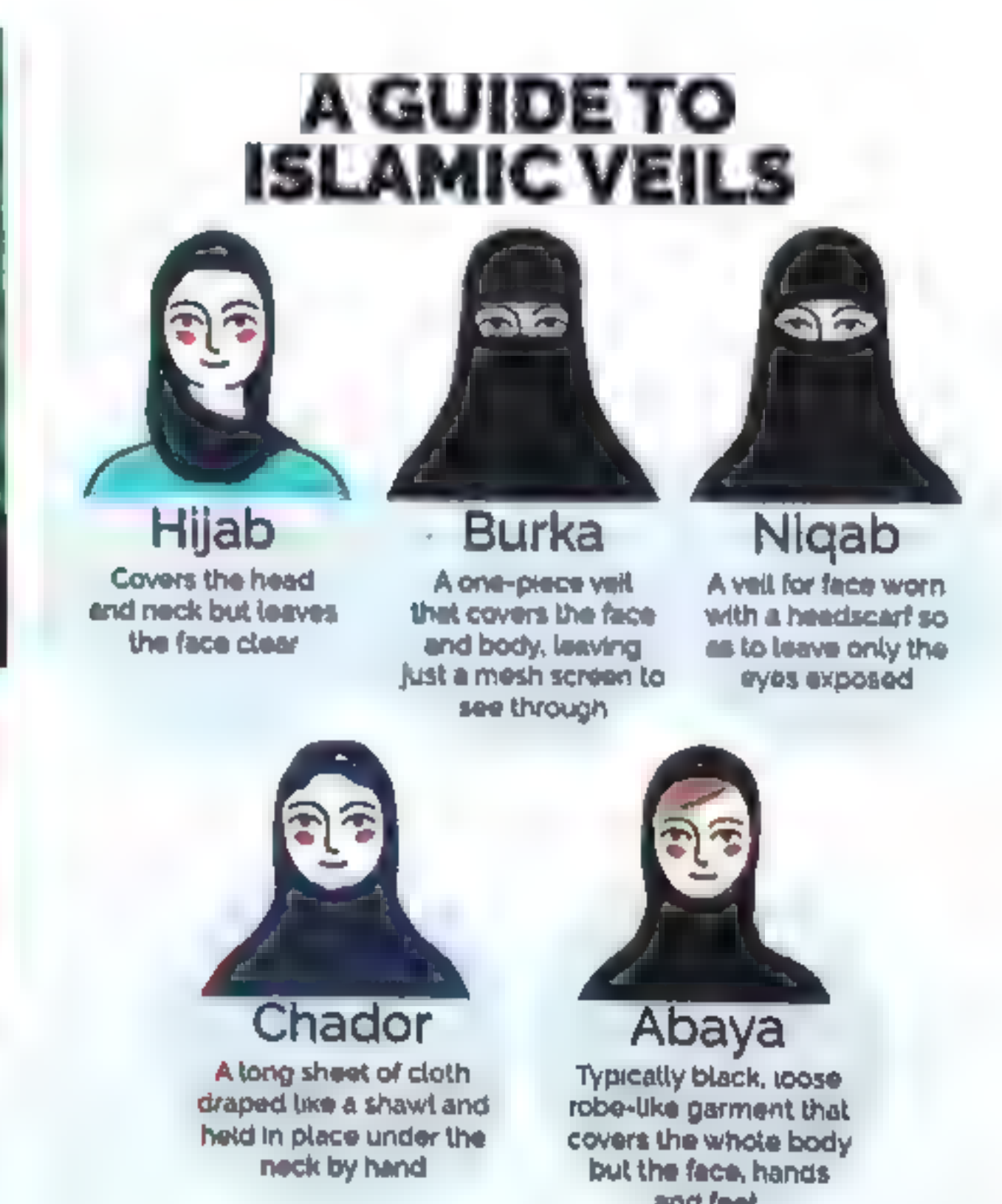
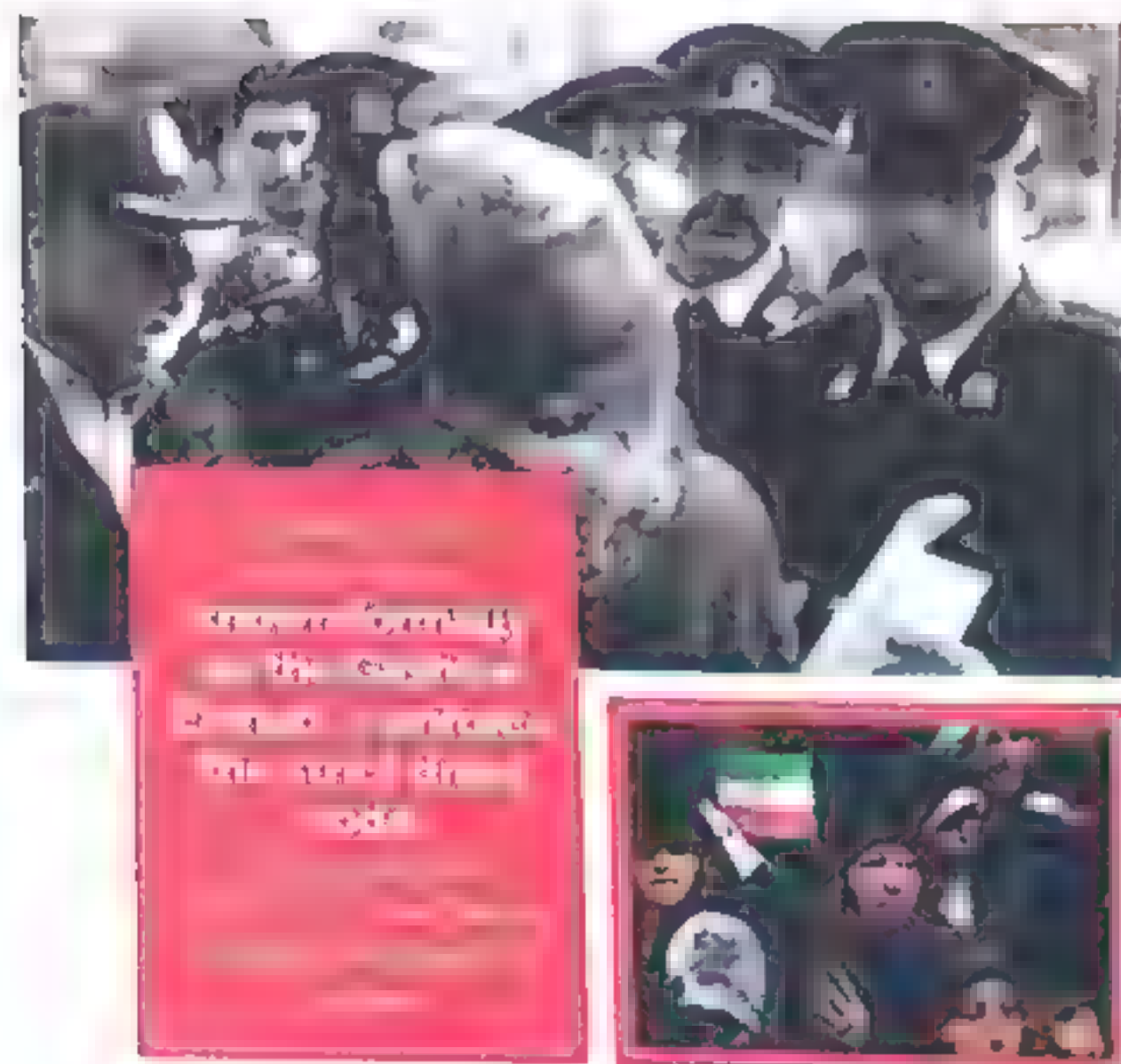
The future of the Commonwealth and its purpose is unclear. Whether it comes together or comes apart will be up to member states. But they will be watching Britain - aware that it is facing its own uncertain future as a wave of dissolution laps against its shores. 

Courtesy: The Guardian





IRAN PROTESTS



The coercive legal power of a state is exercised through police; in the arena of international affairs, however, there has been gradual transformation of this role from national to international. Through special arrangements of the Security Council, the United Nations (UN) has been deploying police in more and more missions under Chapters VI, VII and VIII of its Charter. With more missions employing police, the United Nations' system started examining the role of police and many a report started emerging on the working of police. Brahimi Report of 2000 is considered a point of departure in the sense that it started articulating a police doctrine for the UN. The institutional thinking continued and ultimately the Audit Report of 2008 underscored need for a 'comprehensive police doctrine to govern all aspects of the United Nations police operations'. Based on these observations, the UN started publishing material related to policing, which reflected international best practices and experiences. Based on these insights, the UN issued a framework policy on policing in 2014. The 2014 framework policy was then revised in 2016 and guidelines within this framework with respect to operations, administration, capacity building and command were issued. These documents pack professional police material that may be used as practitioners' literature offering cues for police reforms in domestic settings.



Kamran Adil

The UN literature on policing covers many important areas. Three areas are being discussed here that may be of interest to justice sector leadership in Pakistan. These areas are:

Police Doctrine

Unlike the police doctrine of the colonial Police Act, 1861 (that predominantly remains applicable to most parts of Pakistan) that views police as an 'instrument', the framework policy has defined policing as 'a function of governance responsible for the prevention, detection and investigation of crime; protection of persons and property; and the maintenance of public order and safety'. It is worth noting that the Police Order, 2002, in its articles 3 and 4 adheres to this police doctrine. The police doctrine of the UN requires policing to be representative, responsive and accountable. It uses trite conceptions of these terms, which are reproduced here in verbatim:

a. Representative policing aims to ensure that the human rights of all people, without distinction of any kind such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, are protected, promoted and respected and that police personnel sufficiently reflect the community they serve. Fair and non-discriminatory recruitment and retention policies are expected to encourage, among other goals, an adequate participation of women and minority groups.

b. Responsive policing ensures that police respond to existing and emerging public needs and expectations, especially in preventing and detecting crime and maintaining public order and safety. Policing objectives are informed by the public safety concerns of the communities they serve and are attained lawfully, efficiently and effectively and in accordance with international norms and standards in crime prevention, criminal justice and human rights law.

c. Accountable policing means that police are accountable to the law, as are all individuals and institutions in States; that police are answerable to the public through the democratic and political institutions of the state, as well as through civilian democratic oversight bodies and mechanisms to improve community-police relations; that police are accountable for the way they use the resources allocated to them and that effective mechanisms are established for accountability over police conduct, including any allegations or established human rights violations committed by the police.

Performance Evaluation

Measuring performance of police has been a challenge all over the world. In Pakistan, most of the time, statistical evaluation is carried out. Recently, the call logs for police help and response have been used by police officers, but it has its inaccuracies and is essentially quantitative in nature. The UN, in its guidelines on capacity building of police, offers a framework of police performance measurement. This framework measures three areas with specific indicators. These three areas and specific indicators may be considered for reimagining the performance evaluation of police officers in Pakistan. These are summarized as:

- Measuring organizational processes through standard setting and benchmarking of its policies, training, early warning system, transparency and community interface;
- Measuring police officers' conduct through handling of incidents, response to citizens' complaints and morale;
- Measuring outcomes by looking at crime rates, community opinion, victim surveys, citizen-police cooperation, response times and clearance/disposal rates.

Capacity Building

Another important area where the UN has elaborated professional knowledge is capacity building of police. It classifies capacity building of police into different categories; these include performance capacity, personal capacity, workload capacity, supervisory capacity, facility capacity, support service capacity, systems capacity, structural capacity and role capacity. From

Pakistan's perspective, training of officers is often treated as principal method of capacity building of a police organization. This needs to change. As elaborated by the UN system, all types of capacities must be addressed. The organizational and individual capacities of police must be supplemented with supervisory and facility capacities to ensure that the quality of service improves and the levels achieved are sustained.

Learning from the UN

There is no denying the fact that the UN and a state police organization have different sets of circumstances; therefore, reading too much into UN doctrine and philosophy may not help. Nevertheless, the knowledge produced by the UN system on measuring police performance and capacity building may have some useful clues for those practitioners who align police working towards the rule of law paradigm. From the viewpoint of crime-control strategies, the indigenous approach of aggressive policing may have to be applied as little or no investment and attention are being made in the civil and restorative justice enabling vigilantism and resort to exceptional measures to fight crime in the society. ■

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A competent, effective and neutral civil service is the backbone of any country's governance structure. Countries that do not have an organized civil service system are at a relative disadvantage in executing their programs and policies. However, when civil servants get involved in corruption, it is the country that pays the price. Research at the Asian Development Bank tells us that corruption can cost a country up to 17 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP).



In Pakistan, people generally believe that civil servants are corrupt, as most bureaucrats breed a culture of non-responsiveness, apathy, elitism and arrogance; while they enjoy excessive perks in the form of official vehicles, palatial residences and unlimited allowances. The public concern about corruption is not unfounded as Transparency International, in its report Corruption Perception Index 2021, has ranked Pakistan at 140th position among 180 countries. Pakistan's continuous fall on the parameter for the third

consecutive year is an open and shut case of ours half-hearted efforts at curbing malpractices while doing business at the state level, and also indicates the necessity of reforms and retribution. The report categorically states that complacency in fighting corruption exacerbates human rights abuses and undermines democracy, setting off a vicious spiral. As these rights and freedoms erode and democracy declines, authoritarianism takes its place, contributing to even higher levels of corruption.

What is Corruption?

Corruption is dishonest behaviour by those in positions of power. It denotes



the misuse of public power (by elected politicians or appointed civil servant) for private gain. In order to ensure that not only public but also private corruption between individuals and businesses could be covered by the same simple definition, experts assert that corruption is the misuse of entrusted power (by heritage, education, marriage, election, appointment or whatever else) for private gain. Corruption can entail a variety of actions, including giving or accepting bribes or inappropriate gifts, double-dealing, and defrauding investors.

Definition

According to Petrus van Duyne, "Corruption is an improbity or decay in the decision-making process in which a decision-maker consents to deviate or demands deviation from the criterion which should rule his or her decision-making, in exchange for a reward or for the promise or expectation of a reward, while these motives influencing his or her decision-making cannot be part of the justification of the decision."

According to Transparency International, corruption is the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. It further says that corruption erodes trust, weakens democracy, hampers economic development and further exacerbates inequality, poverty, social division and the environmental crisis.

Corruption in Civil Service

Bureaucracy, politicians, judiciary, police, business community, and even public at large, corruption is one of the major challenges Pakistan has been faced with since long. The menace has particularly tainted the country's civil services. Corruption in civil service has resulted in fundamental tangible and intangible losses for the Pakistani people.

Causes

1. Politicization

In Pakistan's parliamentary form of government with three branches — the judiciary, the legislature and the executive — the last one is headed by the prime minister who is the chief executive of the country. In this system, the civil service acts as primary arm of the government as it is responsible for operational delivery, assisting in policy formulation and implementing programmes and projects. Governance is a phenomenon through which a society regulates itself to achieve peace and prosperity for its citizens. This

function is carried out through the bureaucracy, of which civil service is an integral part. However, when civil service positions are used as rewards for political support or swapped for bribes, the opportunities for high levels of corruption increase significantly.

Lower wages

One of the causes of corruption among the civil servants is their less-than-adequate compensation packages. The importance of adequate remuneration in order to ensure an honest civil service has been widely recognized in the policy debate. A study in 2020 revealed that government servants recruited as gazetted officers in Grade 17 today are worse off as the real value of their take-home salary before any mandatory deductions stands at around Rs23,000 instead of Rs30,000. In comparison, a full-time domestic servant in people's houses these days is getting an average a salary of Rs20,000

with additional three times free meals and free accommodation. So in a way a freshly recruited CSS officer is only getting around Rs3,000 more than a full-time domestic servant.

Administrative delays

Delays in the clearance of files are the root cause of corruption. Particularly at the microeconomic level, bureaucratic holdups and delays cause a significant drag on private businesses. An official who is authorized to pass clearances for projects or industries delays the process

"Power tends to corrupt; absolute power corrupts absolutely."
— Lord Acton



order to make money and other unlawful benefits. A work which can be done in a few days may be done in a month.

Unchallenged authority

In a society which worships power, it is easy for public officials to deviate from ethical conduct. Moreover, delinquent bureaucrats easily get away with misconduct or unscrupulous actions of any kind if found guilty after an internal inquiry,

Weak law-enforcement

Various laws have been made to curb the evil of corruption but their weak enforcement has acted as a hindrance in curbing the menace.

Lack of transparency

There is a restricted flow of information between and among government agencies. The prime reason for this is because government agencies that overlap in dealing with certain public issues are competitive in nature. To gain an advantage over their competitor organizations, they keep vital information to themselves. This creates a lack of transparency in government agencies creating opportunities for crooked administrators to engage in malpractices.

Impact

Corruption hurts everyone. Its impact goes beyond the corrupt individuals, the innocent colleagues who are implicated, or the reputation of the organisation they work for. Ultimately, it is the people of Pakistan who lose out.

1. Moral degradation

The biggest side effect of corruption is the moral degradation of society. This degradation is in terms of social dimension and its effects are large scale - affecting every other possible activity. Corruption on a governmental level induces corruption on a public scale as well as giving birth to organized crime. Public unrest increases exponentially and cities become victims of urban sprawl in extreme situations. A subset of these dwindling morals also translates into diminished work ethics.

2. Depletion of national wealth

Corruption leads to reduced efficiency of civil servants, causing an increase in costs of goods and services, pricey public resources, and unproductive projects at the expense of vital ones like hospitals, roads, schools, water supply, etc. By converting public wealth to personal wealth, bureaucratic corruption substantially reduces the money in the market causing an imbalance in the economy, leading to inflation. Large-scale corruption damages the economy and harms the entire population.

3. Distortion of political development

History is witness to the downfall of political regimes that engaged in corruption. And, it holds true for bureaucracy as well. Corruption leads to the distortion of the political development of the country. Players engage in unethical practices and break laws to establish their monopoly over the entire political scenario. This leads to the

impeachment of citizens' rights and injustice against many individuals.

This may also spark a political struggle between individuals hindering the government's development projects. Furthermore, it may lead to the isolation of certain individuals based on power and socio-economic class sparking a war between the rich and poor.

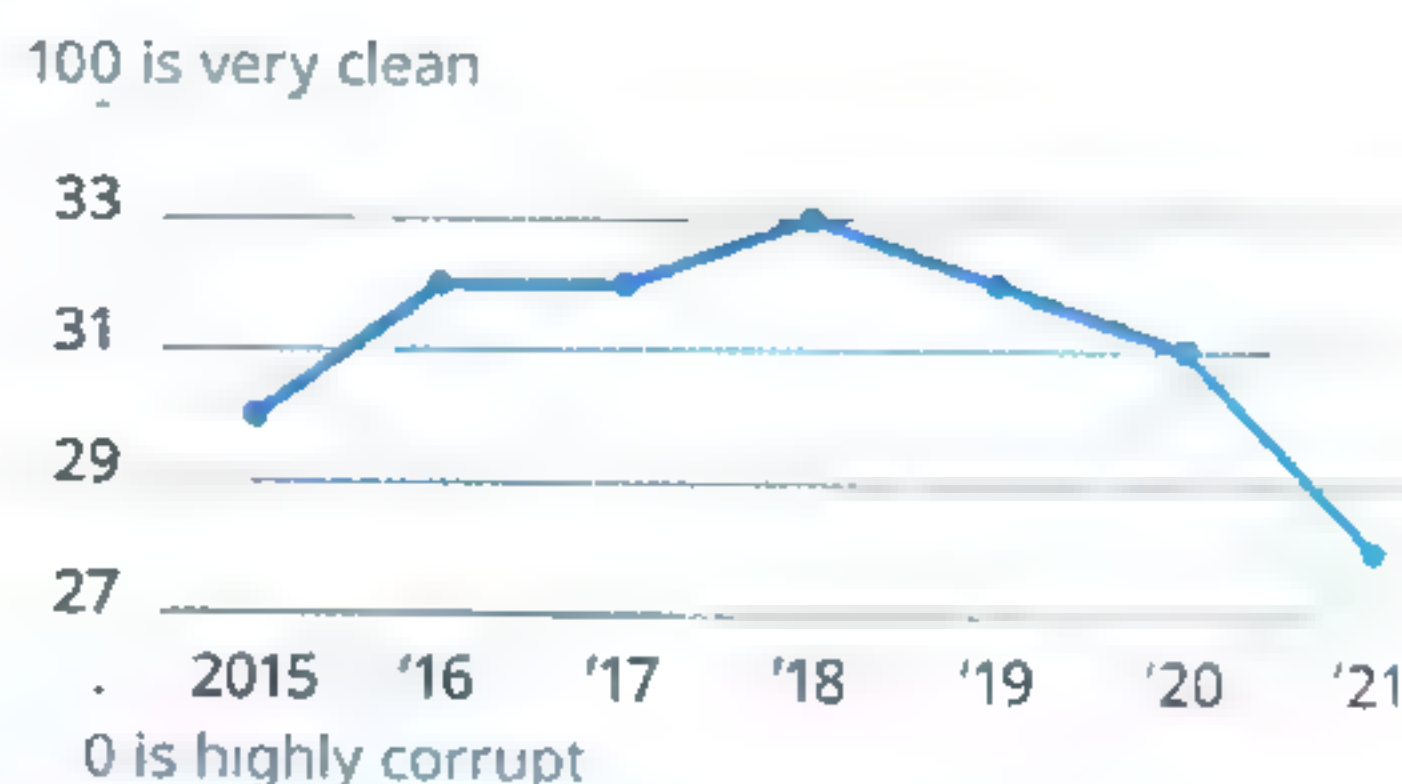
4. Devaluation of democratic culture

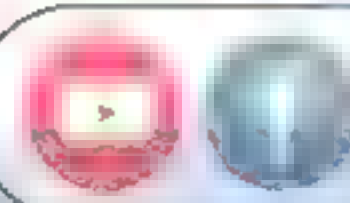
In the social context, corruption discourages active participation by citizens. This is done deliberately by corrupt administrators to reduce transparency and increase the gap between the public and policymakers. This profits them, improving their position and augmenting their individual interests. Due to the resulting frustration and general apathy among the masses, the civil society gradually weakens. Social inequality also increases creating stark differences between the rich and the poor.

5. Human rights

Corruption can affect human rights as an obstacle to their realization in general and as a violation of human rights in specific cases. Corruption in the civil service diverts funds from state budgets to buying their cars and other perks, although those should be dedicated to the advancement

Corruption Perceptions Index Pakistan





of human rights. It, therefore, undermines a State's human rights obligation to maximize available resources for the progressive realization of rights recognized in article 2 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Some other adverse impacts

Lack of quality in services: In a system with corruption, there is no quality of service. To demand quality, one might need to pay for it. This is seen in many areas like municipality, electricity, distribution of relief funds, etc.

Prevalence of injustice: Corruption in judiciary leads to improper justice. And the victims of offense might suffer. A crime may be proved as a benefit of the doubt due to a lack of evidence or even the evidence erased. Due to corruption in the police system, the investigation process has been going on for decades. Hence, in countries where corruption pervades governments and legal systems, law enforcement, legal reform and the fair administration of justice are impeded by corrupt politicians, judges, lawyers, prosecutors, police officers, investigators and auditors.

Poor health and hygiene: In countries with more corruption, one can notice more health problems among people. There will be no fresh drinking water, proper roads, quality food grains supply, milk adulteration, etc. as the money is eaten up by corrupt officials. These low-quality services are all done to save money by the contractors and the officials who are involved.

Failure of genuine research: Research by individuals needs government funding and some of the funding agencies have corrupt officers. These people sanction the funds for research to those investigators who are ready to bribe them.

Loss of public trust: Corruption erodes the trust we have in the public sector to act in our best interests. It also wastes our taxes or rates that have been earmarked for important community projects - meaning we have to put

up with poor quality services or infrastructure, or we miss out altogether. Corruption undermines the fairness of institutions and processes and distorts policies and priorities. As a result, corruption damages the legitimacy of regimes leading to a loss of public support and trust for state and government institutions.

Lack of respect for rulers: Rulers of the nation like the president or prime ministers lose respect among the public when their policies do not bring desired results. And, it happens, in large part, due to corrupt officials. Respect is the main criteria in social life. People go for voting during the election with the desire to improve their living standards by the election winner and respect for the leader. If the politicians are involved in corruption, people knowing this will lose respect for them and will not like to cast their vote for such politicians.

Low FDI: Corruption in government bodies has led to many foreign investments going back from developing countries. Administrative delays cause delays in investments, the starting of industries, and also growth.

Lack of development: Many new industries willing to get started in a particular region change their plans if the region is unsuitable. If there are no proper roads, water, and electricity, the companies do not wish to start up there, which hinders the economic progress of that region.

Way Forward

Unfortunately, the pandemic of corruption has spread so deep in the land of the pure that it has become a way of life. Unless this menace is brought under control, the country has no future. In Pakistan, it is commonly perceived that politicisation and corruption in the civil service has seriously undermined the country's socioeconomic progress at the cost of public service delivery and damaged the credibility of the state and its institutions. Sadly, past efforts to restructure the civil service fell apart mainly because of ineffective strategies and inadequate homework to push through the reforms. Notwithstanding a few bad eggs, a considerable majority of government officers are competent, well-educated, adequately trained, honest and true to their cause of working for the public sector. The only thing that must be done to eradicate corruption among them is to formulate strict laws that must be fairly and transparently implemented. Without that, it would be naive to expect the bureaucracy to be prepared to serve the people with sincerity and respond efficiently to their needs. 🇵🇰

The writer is an expert on International Law.



Foreign remittances have multiple socio-economic and political effects for a country. For example, an empirical study concludes that a one percent increase in foreign remittances raises GDP by 0.25% in Pakistan.

Foreign remittances have a major role in containing trade and fiscal imbalances. In fact, workers' remittances have assumed central role in the external sector management

were entitled for exemption from tax.

In 1972, the Economic Coordination Committee of the Cabinet (ECC) decided that the "origin of funds remitted from abroad for non-repatriable industrial investment should not be questioned."

The Finance Ordinance, 1973, expanded the scope of the term "foreign remittance" to include spouse, parents and dependent children subject to the condition that the funds



TAXATION

Policy for Foreign Remittances

over the past few decades.

Therefore, most of the countries, especially the developing ones, have adopted a policy of not taxing the foreign remittances. Pakistan is no exception and historically the Income Tax Act of 1922 vide section 4(2) empowered the Tax Department to tax foreign remittances in the hands of wife sent by the husband working abroad out of his 'untaxed foreign income'.

At the time of independence, people were allowed to bring money from India and other countries into Pakistan and such inflows of money were declared tax-free. Exemption from taxation was available to any sum of money remitted into Pakistan whether through banking channel or non-banking channel. Effective from April 1, 1956, the amounts that were remitted into Pakistan through the normal banking channels and which entered the foreign exchange control system were declared exempt through Circular No. 7 of 1957.

Nonetheless, after April 1, 1960, only incomes earned abroad by non-resident Pakistanis and remitted into their own accounts through normal banking channels

had been transferred through normal banking channels to encourage inflow of foreign currency. Throughout 1970s and 1980s, foreign remittances were not taxed in the hands of spouse or other members of the remitter's family, and were accepted without further questions when claimed as a source against investment, expenditure or purchase of assets.

The Protection of Economic Reforms Act, 1992, was



MEASURING THE ECONOMIC SECURITY OF PAKISTAN: A SOUTH ASIAN PERSPECTIVE

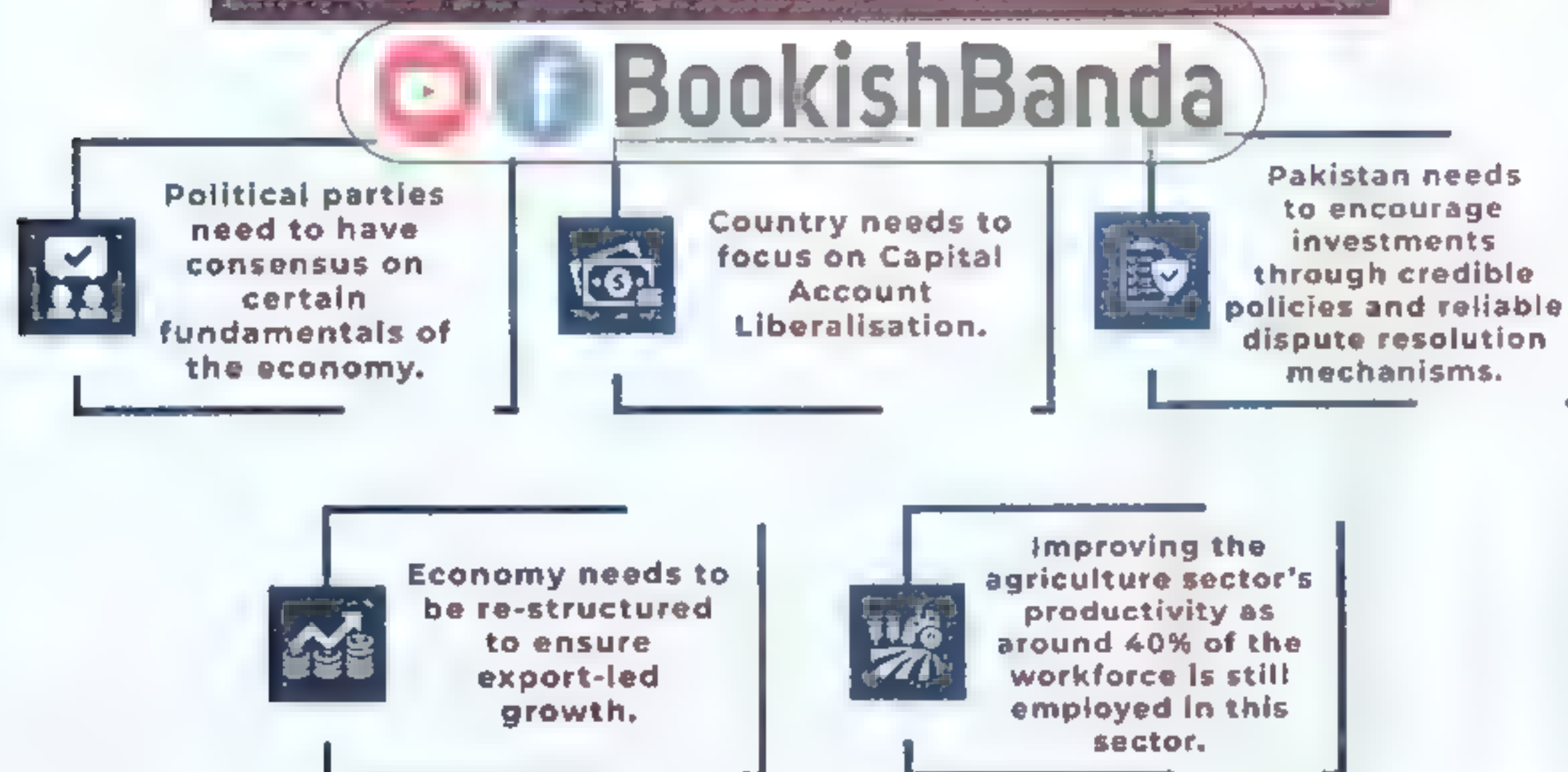
Economic interventions such as structural reforms are required to bring the economy on the path of sustainable development.

TOP 5 SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES IN TERMS OF ECONOMIC SECURITY



Ranking is based on authors' macroeconomic approach

MAJOR POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PAKISTAN



Source: IPRI

promulgated as a parallel foreign exchange regulation in Pakistan. To give effect, clause (6A), Part IV, 2nd Schedule to the ITO, 1979, was inserted vide SRO 219(I)/01, dated March 16, 1991, which effectively amnestied "any amount of foreign exchange" deposited in a private foreign currency account (FCA) held with an authorized bank in Pakistan in accordance with SBP's Foreign Currency Accounts Scheme (FCAS) introduced by the State Bank of Pakistan."

The Finance Ordinance, 2001, ended up inserting subsection (2A) in section 13 of the ITO, 1979, to amnesty "any amount of foreign exchange remitted from abroad through normal banking channels and got encashed in Pakistan rupees from a scheduled bank and a certificate is produced to that effect from such bank."

Upon promulgation, the ITO, 2001, also carried a *pari materia* provision in sub-section (4) of section 111 to ensure continuation. This provision effectively took out of equation the residential status of the remitter and the locus of earning of the amount. Up until 2015, there was no upper limit to avail exemption u/s 111(4) of the ITO, 2001. A limit of Rs.10 million was brought in 2018, which

was, later on, reduced to Rs.5 million vide Finance Act, 2019. However, this exemption was available subject to the fulfilment of four conditions, namely:

- (a) the remitted amount is in foreign exchange;
- (b) the amount is remitted into Pakistan through normal banking channels;
- (c) the amount is encashed by a scheduled bank; and
- (d) a certificate of encashment is issued by the bank concerned.

Sub-section (1) of section 111 provides that where any amount is credited in a person's books of accounts or a person has made any investment or is the owner of any money or has incurred expenditure or has concealed income and the person offers no explanation about such amount, investment, money, expenditure or income, or the explanation is not satisfactory, such amount or the value of such investment, money, expenditure or income is added to the person's income chargeable to tax. However, the said provision is not

applicable to any amount of foreign exchange which is not exceeding Rs.10 million in a tax year remitted from outside Pakistan through normal banking channels that is encashed into rupees by a scheduled bank and a certificate to this effect is produced from such bank. Through the Finance Act, 2019, the limit of Rs 10 million has been reduced to Rs 5 million in a tax year. Therefore, foreign remittances exceeding Rs 5 million do not attract any addition to income chargeable to tax under section 111(1) of the Income Tax Ordinance, 2001. However, if the nature and source of foreign remittance is not explainable, such amount will be added to income chargeable to tax. Even if the amount of foreign remittance is more than Rs 5 million in a tax year, the Commissioner can only ask the source of foreign remittance. In case the source is explainable, no further proceedings will be undertaken. ■

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The Flood Disaster

Causes and Management



The death toll has, so far, crossed the grim milestone of 1400 and it is likely to rise further. Around 33 million people - one out of every seven Pakistanis - are sleeping outside, in the open sky. Close to one million homes

have been destroyed. Roads, railroads, power transmission lines, gas transmission lines, irrigation systems, schools, hospitals, dams and other critical infrastructure have been obliterated as more than 118 districts of Pakistan are inundated with

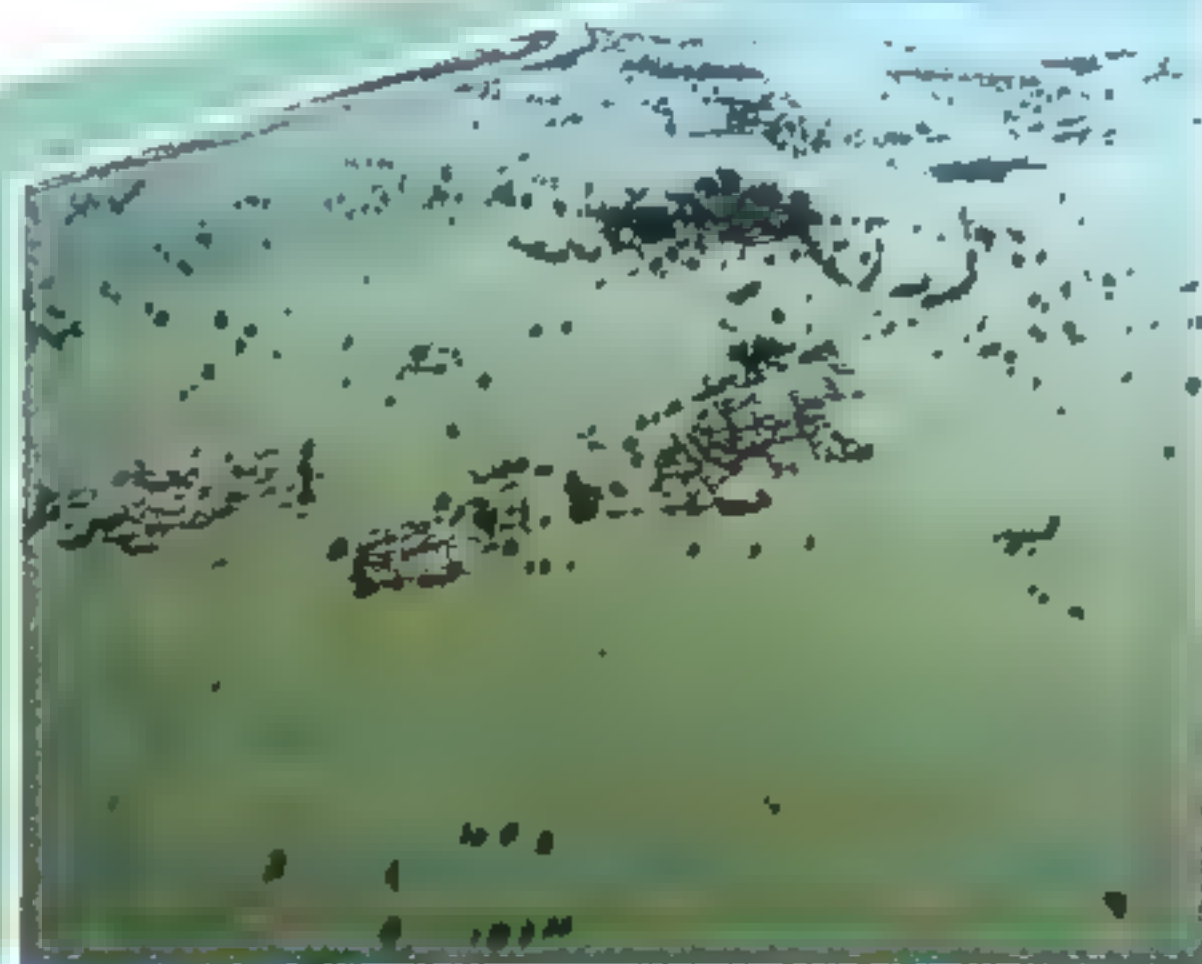
floodwater. An estimated 37 percent of Pakistanis have been displaced and are desperately waiting for the flood, water and shelter. Around 800,000 heads of livestock have perished. Standing crops on around 3.5 million acres of land have washed away, leaving nothing but ruins and devastation. The initial, provisional assessment of the immediate damage has been estimated conservatively at \$30 billion which is likely to reduce Pakistan's GDP by two percent. Pakistan is now facing the very frightening prospect of food insecurity due to the washing away of more than 70 percent of staple crops. The trail of destruction left by the monstrous flood would continue to haunt Pakistan's economy, infrastructure and communities for years to come. But

the pertinent question here is: what has happened this year? Monsoon has been an annual phenomenon for thousands of years here in South Asia, why this regular and critical rainfall pattern has turned so violent and devastating this time? The answer involves many factors. Some are discussed hereunder.

Finding the underlying cause of this "Monsoon on Steroid" is a

complex job. There are multiple factors behind this unprecedented calamity. Some have triggered this and others increased its intensity and devastation. Climate change, though, can be termed as one of the chief reasons behind the 2022 monster monsoon flood.

Climate change and the resultant global warming are leading to stronger monsoons with higher precipitation. An increased temperature enhances the water-holding capacity of the clouds which, in return, leads to increased precipitation. In a briefing to UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, Maj. Gen. Zafar Iqbal, the Coordinator of the National Flood Response and Coordination Center (NFRCC), told that Pakistan received 518 percent more rainfall than usual during the current monsoon season. We have witnessed the wettest July and August in the last 62 years. There are also reports that the monsoon is also shifting towards the south of the country, with its increasing intensity.



Pakistan usually receives 3 to 4 cycles of monsoon during the July-August period, but, this year, we received more than 8 intense spells of rainfall that caused torrential rains in Sindh, urban flooding, flash floods in South Punjab and lower Sindh, and glacial floods in the country's northern areas. The ever-increasing global temperature is also hitting Pakistan hard. We have the third largest ice mass in the world after the South and North Poles. The temperature rise is causing the melting and receding of these glaciers which, directly or indirectly, contributed to the humanitarian crisis of epic proportions. Another point worth mentioning here is that Pakistan is extremely vulnerable to the slightest change in climatic patterns. Since 2010, the average global temperature has increased by 1.10°C. In other words, a mere increase of 0.10°C has caused an almost-existential threat for the country and it is scary to imagine what will happen to us when the world would be able to cap temperature at 1.5°C, the target stipulated by the Paris Climate Accord. Pakistan's ongoing tragedy has shown the world that even the most-cherished temperature goal can cause devastation for some countries. There is no denying that climate change has started to take a heavy toll in terms of human and economic losses.

Pakistan's physiography is also a contributing factor behind the frequent occurrence of floods. Since 1947, Pakistan has witnessed more than 20 major floods which proved very costly for the economy and life and property. Indus Basin is home to the Indus River and its tributaries which provide a natural channel for draining overflow caused by the monsoon. The Indus Basin has developed in such a way that it does not support free and quick drainage of the floodwater, and neither can it absorb surplus runoff. This is evident from the fact that areas in Sindh and Punjab remained inundated for three to four months in the wake of the 2010 flood. And this time, it will take 3 to 6 months for floodwater to recede in many hardest-hit areas. So, natural physio-geography adds to the vulnerability of Pakistan.

Though climate change is the chief factor behind the occurrence of this tragedy, we cannot, and should not, place our fingers only on it. Unlike heatwaves, glacial melts and droughts, which are certainly the outcomes of changing weather patterns and unpredictability in climate change, impacts of floods can be managed or mitigated to

a large extent provided that we undertake prompt preemptive measures. Most of the losses incurred by the flood are the outcome of poor planning and governance. In this regard, poor development planning deserves some attention. The relationship between human settlements in riverine beds, shoulders and banks and flood intensity is positively co-related. The data analysis of heavy floods in the past - those in 1995, 2003, 2007, 2010 - and the one of 2022, indicates that the frequency and intensity of floods multiply with increase in human activities in the riverbed and adjacent areas. The human settlements obstruct the natural flow of water and it leads to the washing away of properties that come in the way. The government has done nothing to discourage this steady encroachment of riverine paths. Instead, it provided public infrastructure and amenities under the name of tourism promotion which eventually proved too costly to bear. Hence, weak governance and criminal negligence on the part of state machinery did contribute to the overall vulnerability of the local communities and areas.

Deforestation has also been a major contributor to flood calamity. The riverine, or Bela, forests stabilize the natural levees by binding the soil together. But the growing population and concomitant needs for fuel wood have almost wiped out these forests from the upper and lower Indus Basin. Corruption and mismanagement on the part of provincial forest departments can also be blamed for the loss of this natural safeguard against floods. Deforestation increases the frequency and intensity of floods because erosion adds siltation and increases the level of riverbeds, which, in turn, decreases the water-holding capacity of rivers.

Apart from these structural constraints, the federal and provincial governments did nothing to take preparatory and mitigation measures. Contrary to the cases of earthquakes or other natural disasters, well-tested early warning systems are now available that can accurately predict the level and intensity of an upcoming flood. Many powerful computer programs can forecast future rainfall and map those areas that may be affected by floods. Pakistan has many such public and private institutions that have been counting on these programs for accurately forecasting and issuing warnings. Pakistan's metrological department had already warned the government well before the start of the 2022 monsoon season about the unprecedented rainfall and resultant flood that might eclipse the 2010 flood in intensity and scale. Pakistan's federal minister for climate change, Sherry Rahman, also warned on 19 June 2022 about the extraordinary rainfall that might end up in a monster flood. But nothing was done. Two precious months were wasted. There are many

areas where both federal and provincial governments failed conspicuously to take action. For example, the institutions could have mapped the vulnerable localities in the light of the 2010 flood and urged people through SMS-based communication to evacuate voluntarily from flood-prone areas. It could have built makeshift arrangements - for instance, the NHA roads or other government buildings - for sheltering people and livestock. But they got out of their deep slumber only after the arrival of the floodwater. The NDMA and PDMAs should have arranged rescue-and-relief equipment including boats, power units, mobile field hospitals, dispensaries and machinery in those areas which were under dire warning. There could have been some arrangements to protect sources of potable water from floodwater so that people could not have faced a shortage of drinking water. Data from satellite and of past floods could have been used to remove obstacles like illegal constructions and roads that might fall along the route of floodwater. But nothing was done. Pakistan's institutions remained busy with the routine exercise of submitting the local disaster plans to the government. The concerned departments did what they do every year: passing the buck to another department.

Apart from economic devastation, the imminent threat of food insecurity reaching the level of famine should also be a serious concern. The destruction of 3.5 million acres of farmland having wheat, rice and other staple crops is set to create an unprecedented level of food shortage. The increase in the support price of wheat (to 4000 and 3000 per maund by Sindh and Punjab governments, respectively) would further burden the urban dwellers. The flood crisis is fast becoming a health crisis of epic proportions. Millions of people are now at risk of infectious waterborne diseases like dysentery and cholera. Worse still, the stagnant water can spread vector-borne diseases like malaria and dengue fever. The destruction of more than 1400 health facilities and the resultant disrupted access to healthcare is set to further aggravate the crisis. So, in terms of economic devastation, food insecurity and health crisis, coupled with the fact that our economy was already under serious stress even before the occurrence of the flood, Pakistan is

in deep trouble. But can we afford to return to the business-as-usual approach after the normalization of the situation and wait for another more serious and more devastating natural disaster? Obviously, no!

Now that the disaster has struck and both public and private organizations are doing rescue-and-relief operations, along with some reconstruction and rehabilitation, the significance of suggesting measures that can preempt such calamities from happening in the future has become way more important.

Like every year when we experience flood-caused destruction, the dam-led flood management vs. non-dam flood control debate has raised its head again this time as well. Both sides engage in

a fierce debate about whether Pakistan needs more dams or should it just switch to more sustainable options like recharging aquifers and restoring riverine and other ecosystems. Ostensibly, ecosystem restoration looks more appealing, particularly when you see the construction of dams and canalizing its rivers is a very expensive undertaking and it obstructs the natural flow of the rivers. But as a matter of fact, Pakistan can ill-afford such long-term solutions. We are fighting for survival and such slogans may suit some developed countries, but these cannot address our immediate concerns. Although the United States has dismantled some dams, yet it still has a huge number of dams. The data by World Commission on Dams show that there are, at present, 58,000 large dams in the world and more than half of them have been built in China and India. If we add all the small and large dams in Pakistan, the total number hardly reaches 500, and fewer than a dozen qualify as

large dams. Though dams have multiple

functions to serve like storage of water for irrigation, hydroelectric power, industrial and domestic consumption, ecological amelioration, fishing, tourism, and recharging of groundwater, their primary aim has always been flood-prevention, mitigation and management. The dams are constructed in such a way that they break down the intensity of floodwater and channel them into weak streams downward. In a research paper published in journal the Nature in 2021, the authors proved that flow regulation by dams helped protect



people downstream while concluding that dams reduce the number of people exposed to floods by 20.6 percent. The rainfall pattern here in Pakistan is not equally distributed throughout the year; it is concentrated only in three months. If we don't have storage capabilities, what we should do for the remaining 9 months? Pakistan does not have time to switch to an eco-system-based solution as we are set to face water shortage as soon as 2025 and our agriculture, the backbone of our economy, is a water-intensive sector. So, it is almost absurd to follow the examples of developed countries that have benefited from dams for almost a century and are now advising us to avoid investing in dams. We should go for this solution; otherwise, we are soon going to run out of water for agriculture and even for domestic consumption. Dams will always be an effective tool for floodwater storage and diversion. There should be no doubt about that.

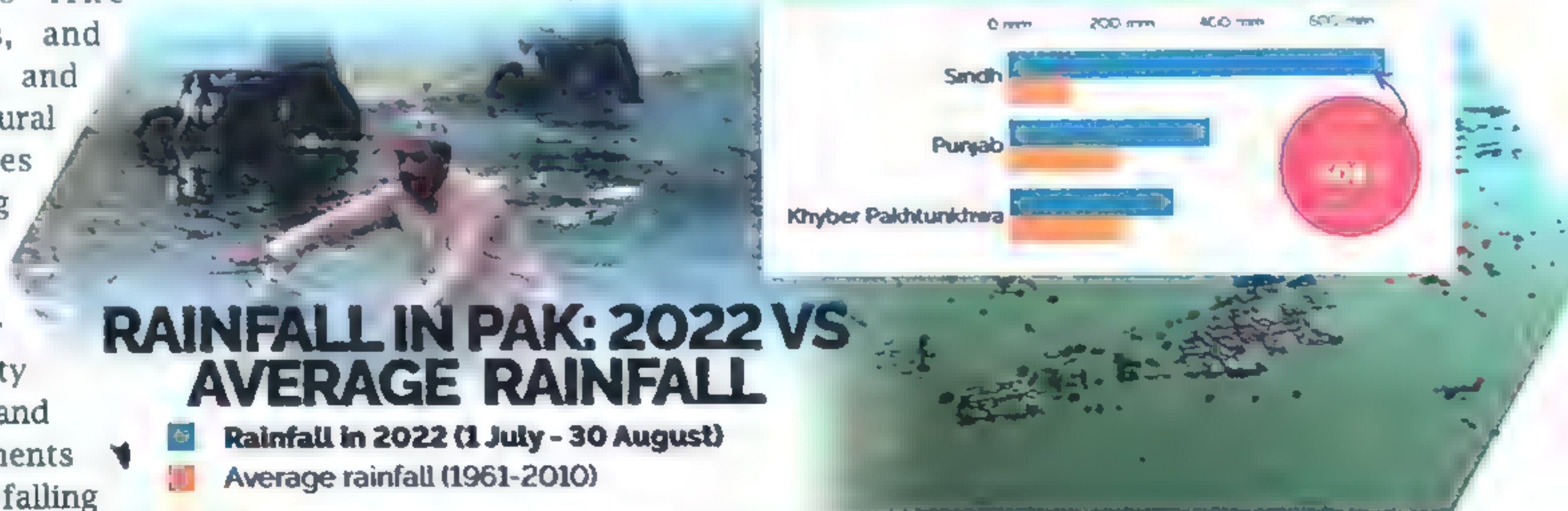
The flood mitigating approach can be divided into two categories: structural and non-structural measures. Structural mitigation measures reduce the harms of floodwater by building or upgrading existing infrastructures like floodgates, levees, and

evacuation routes and shelters. Non-structural migration measures include removing people out of affected areas and protecting their properties. Property buyouts where local and provincial governments purchase properties falling within high-risk areas,

permanent relocation, development, and strict implementation of building codes are some non-structural measures that most governments all over the world practice to ensure effective flood mitigation and management.

The third approach is related to floodplains and stream restoration. No doubt, it is the most comprehensive answer to tackle floods, droughts, depleting groundwater, and climate change. But it is a long-term process and deserves systematic and gradual implementation. In 2019 a study was published under the title of Hindu Kush Himalaya Assessment about the status of glaciers in Pakistan. The report warned that Pakistan's glaciers were melting and receding fast and Pakistan could lose 1/3 to 2/3 of its ice mass by 2100. The fast-melting glaciers would continue to produce heavier floods, bigger landslides, soil erosion and other hazards up until 2050-60 and then there will be prolonged spells of harsher droughts and a shortage of hydroelectric power. This report does indicate that Pakistan needs to work on both

dam-based flood management and riverine ecosystem restoration simultaneously. But what does ecosystem restoration entail? A few things! In a simple phrase, it is the restoration of riverine corridors and active floodplains all along the 3186km length of rivers. The estimated area of riverine corridors and active plains in Pakistan is 21000 km. The 6km wide area along the rivers belongs to the state and this is the area that needs rehabilitation of lost wetlands and regeneration of Bela forests. The complete restoration of riverine corridors can help break flood velocity, recharge aquifers and absorb flood peaks. Multiple reports prove that the scientific management of active floodplains and corridors can hold up to 30-50MAF of floodwater. Apart from flood mitigation, this approach can potentially recharge aquifers, tackle droughts and reduce GHG emissions. There is no denying that floods are considered all over the world the deadliest, costliest and oft-repeated type of natural disasters. No country, let alone Pakistan, can handle this disaster of biblical proportions. Pakistan and other countries are paying a heavy price for the centuries-



old ruthless exploitation of natural resources by developed countries. Climate has certainly played a role in generating larger-than-usual monsoon and accelerating the melting of glaciers, but the criminal negligence on the part of governments is also a contributing factor in the creation of this worst-ever humanitarian crisis. Had our administration taken a few proactive, prompt measures, the situation would have been not so worse. The absence of local government set-up, the inability to delegate disaster management authorities at the district level, the haphazard growth of infrastructure in valleys upstream and in active floodplains downstream, the chronic political instability, destruction of Bela forests and other wetland ecosystems along river levees are also some factors that can be held responsible for this calamity. Climate adaptation and resilience must be an integral part of our national planning; otherwise, we are going to face such disasters again and again. ■

The writer is a graduate of the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad. He writes on national and international affairs.

Let's start with the consuming attitude of the people. It is a fact that in Pakistani society, people spend more than what they earn. Our domestic saving rate is 12.3% (2019) while this rate in India and China is 29.32% and 44.9%, respectively. To rely on its domestic financial sources, a country should have a 25% saving rate; otherwise, it will have to depend on foreign resources to meet its expenses. Pakistan does the same. To meet the country's expenses and stabilize the economy, the government of Pakistan rather than drawing up policies to encourage domestic savings prefers to go to IMF to seek bailout packages.

Lack of strategic planning is a major fault made by the country's ruling class. Whenever the country gets a bailout

packages from IMF, it comes out of the immediate economic crisis only, but, in the long run, the "boom-and-bust" cycles continue which mars the ability of the financial system to be on the path of sustainable growth that is essential to breaking the vicious cycle of poverty and creating employment opportunities for the citizens. It is true that providing employment opportunities to the youth is quite a difficult task for the state, but what adds fuel to this fire of ineptness is that the cost of doing business is also high in the country. Even if foreign investors are, somehow, convinced to invest in Pakistan, the problematic and long procedures as well as other problems they go through deter them from bringing their money to Pakistan. A dire shortage of electricity, water and gas, numerous rules and regulations, lack of

coordination among the government agencies, delays in the court procedures, infringement of intellectual property rights and evasion of taxes by competitors are the factors that hamper foreign direct investment and dissuade the investors.

The perennial crisis of governance also presents a serious challenge to the country's economy. An overwhelming majority of policies in different sectors, e.g. education, health, trade and agriculture, are almost the same as they were fifty years ago. In spite of that, there is no significant record to prove that even these have been implemented in letter and spirit, and were able to achieve the stated objectives. All successive governments, whether military or civilian, tried to introduce their own policies whenever they came to power; they rejected the policies introduced by the previous government with a single stroke of the pen to make people believe that only they have the solutions to the country's problems and that the previous administration

The economy of Pakistan is facing many issues, and without tackling those we can't hope to take advantage of the available opportunities. Large consumer society, low revenue, meager savings, scant investments, high expenses, ballooning imports, high cost of doing business, excessive taxation, energy crisis, bad governance, political instability and unpredictability are some of the major reasons behind the dwindling economy of Pakistan. Despite all these challenges, it seems pertinent to say that all is not lost yet as there are solutions to all these problems. Some of these are lowering interest rates, building human capital and making an apt use of the young labour force of the country, as well as bringing technological advancement, ensuring good governance and decentralizing power.

The Economy of Pakistan

Challenges and Prospects

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was completely inept and did not care for the people. The projects of their predecessors have no worth for them. This behavior not only proves costly – it washes away all the investments made by the previous government, leading to increased cost of the same if someone later chooses to revive these projects – but also causes inordinate delays.

In the same way, political instability and lawlessness also are a formidable threat to the economy of Pakistan. In a country where ills like poverty, corruption, increasing population, unequal distribution of wealth, illiteracy and an ever-soaring inflation are already weakening the economy, political instability only creates further problems for its economy. Therefore, there is a dire need to complete the reorientation of the present governance model.

Although the economy of Pakistan is facing several mighty challenges, yet there are some significant factors that have considerable potential for the country's economic growth. The first on this list is the huge youth force the potential of which can be harnessed for the economic development of the country. Proper education should be provided to them so as to make this huge human capital a real asset of the country. Pakistan and India are two countries where the number of young people in the total population is high.

The country's youth should be provided abundant employment opportunities as it is necessary to avoiding the cancer of brain drain. They must be trained to work in various sectors of the economy and the government should make policies to attract foreign investment in those sectors.

Likewise, good governance as well as devolution and decentralization of power will help to provide the national economy a much-needed boost. Devolution of power is imperative as a person sitting in the capital can never know the needs of the people living in far-flung districts of the country. It is the local government that has a better understanding of the needs and requirements of the people. National Finance Commission (NFC) Award and the 18th Amendment are positive initiatives to delegate authority, but more efforts are needed to properly devolve the power and make provincial governments accountable for the resources they have at their disposal to spend. According to the United Nations, participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus-oriented, equity and inclusiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, and accountability are eight indicators to measure good governance. And Pakistan should use them effectively.

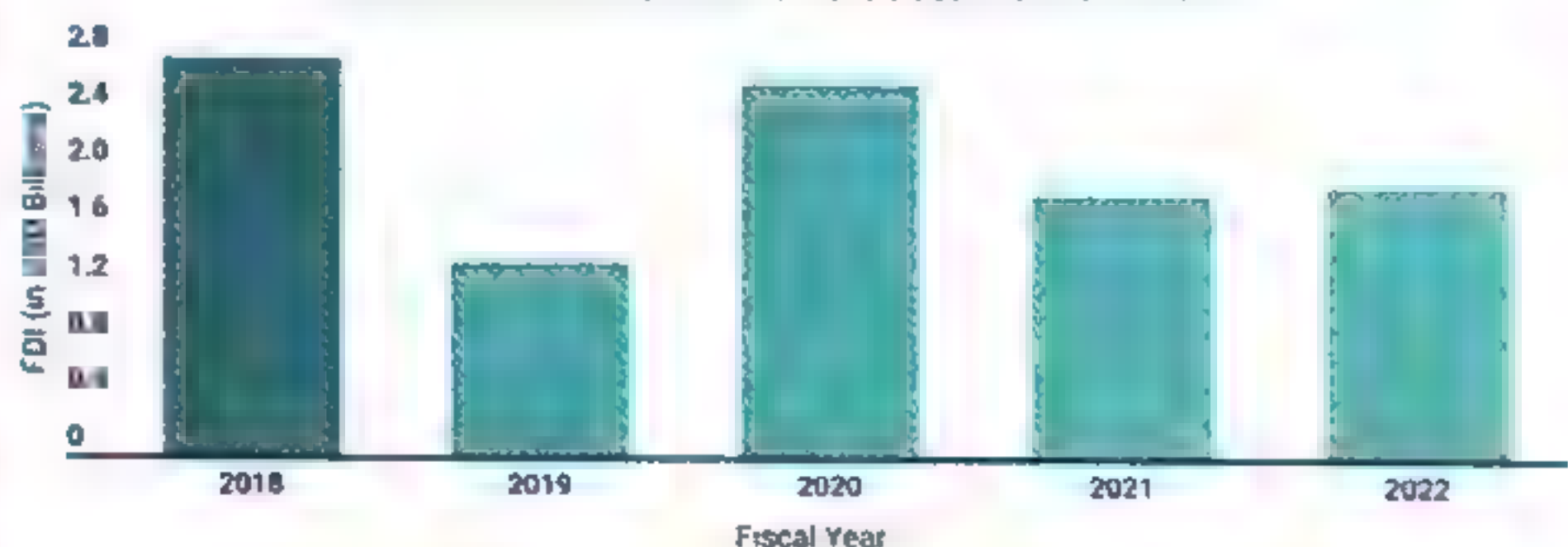
In addition to the above, the use of technology can also help to stabilize the economy of Pakistan. Technology is the pivotal cause of globalization and its helps keep pace with the rest of the world. We cannot survive without incorporating modern technology into our economic model. It not only saves time and cost but also completes work efficiently and effectively. It is a powerful tool that can be used to improve the performance of banks, agriculture, trade and industry.

Beyond a shadow of a doubt, the economy is the backbone of any country. And the progress of a country is highly dependent on the stability and growth of its economy. Therefore any country's administration must make good policies and ensure their implementation to strengthen its financial model. With pragmatic policymaking and effective governance, Pakistan will continue to integrate into the global economy, making full use of the opportunities that globalization has created for the welfare of its people. ■

The writer is doing her MPhil (Management) from Hailey College of Commerce.

EXTERNAL IMBALANCES OF PAKISTAN: CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES AND REMEDIES

Pakistan needs to remove barriers to FDI and improve investment environment for stable and sustainable inflow



MAJOR SECTORS THAT ATTRACT FDI



Manufacturing



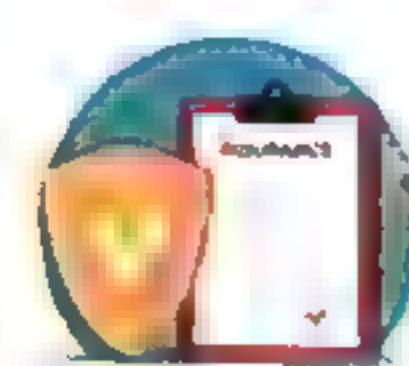
Electricity, gas, air conditioning supply





Construction



Wholesale & retail trade of Motor Vehicles



Financial and Insurance Activities



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Addressing Balochistan's Concerns

The only recipe for a prosperous Pakistan

Abdul Wahab Baloch

Balochistan is the heart of Pakistan and it is the province that has endowed Pakistan with a wonderful geostrategic location. It is the gateway to CPEC that connects China to the Middle East and Africa via Indian Ocean. It also borders Pakistan with Iran and Afghanistan. Balochistan, also the largest province of Pakistan in terms of area, has abundant natural resources, e.g. gas, gold, copper, valuable stones, chromite and oil. Gwadar port is another asset upon which the future of our country is dependent. A whopping \$62 billion will be invested in CPEC projects a major chunk of which lies in Balochistan with Gwadar being the center of gravity. This huge investment will surely create numerous opportunities for the youth of the province in terms of jobs, employment and development. However, to make the most of CPEC, addressing the grievances of the people of Balochistan is indeed a sine qua non.

Balochistan's prized location gives it an evil eye which catches this beautiful part of Pakistan in its gaze that has inflicted it with misconceptions, terrorism and precarious law and order situation. The arrest of Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadhav and his confession of being involved in a satanic mission of creating fissures in

Balochistan and undermining Pakistan's national integration is but one proof of it. Balochistan has a history of wars, military operations, terrorism and foreign involvement, and these menaces are a major reason why it is still backward. Following are some points that can be considered the main causes of problems faced by Balochistan and the grievances the people of this jewel in the crown of Pakistan have.

1. Military operations

The Baloch people are loyal and patriots to the core and they only need love and respect. In a research published in JSTOR, the researcher suggested about the Baloch people: "Give them love and respect if you need to conquer them, because it is so tough to defeat them by force." But, unfortunately, there have been a number of military operations carried out in Balochistan with an aim to eliminate separatist movements. However though they achieved a little success — these operations have failed to bring long-term peace in the region.

2. Ownership of indigenous resources

An image which showed females of Sui (Dera Bugti) carrying dry bushes above the Sui gas pipeline to be used as fuel in stoves is a painful reminder that the true owners of the sources in these lands have been long deprived of their due rights. Natural gas, which is being

provided to the whole country from Sui, is not available to them local populace. This sense of alleviation and deprivation further deepens the fissures between the Baloch people and the State of Pakistan. Also take the example of Chagai district, which has abundant reserves of gold, copper and other precious minerals, but still is amongst the poorest areas of Pakistan, lacking even the basic facilities.

3. Foreign hand

There are no two opinions that foreign enemies have a huge involvement in Balochistan as they want to destabilise Pakistan. Amongst these hostile forces, our neighbour India takes the lead. The confession of Kulbhushan Jadhav is an irrefutable proof in this regard. However, let me say that the above-stated problems provide a strong incentive to foreign hands to exploit the people of Balochistan.

4. Corruption

Balochistan has become a hub of corruption and it is done so brazenly that, in 2014, a provincial minister and his secretary were caught on charges of massive corruption – even the water tanks in Mr Secretary's home were filled with Pakistani currency. There has been no check and balance on developmental projects and spending of the annual budgets due to which the province is left underdeveloped.

5. Lack of basic amenities

Healthcare system in the province is so poor that people in the peripheral areas can hardly get proper treatment. With limited access even to basic health units, a number of people die every year of even curable diseases, let alone hepatitis and cancer which are rampant in the province. In addition, prevalent illiteracy is also a big issue as educational institutions are very few in number and even these don't live up to the standards of quality institutions. As per Pakistan Economic Survey 2021-22, literacy rate (10 years and above) in Balochistan is 54.5 percent as compared to 55.1 percent in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 61.8 percent in Sindh and 66.3 percent in Punjab. This speaks volumes about the state of education in the province.

Way forward

Now comes the real question: can the state of affairs improve?

The answer is a big YES!

Below are some important measures that can help ease the tensions and bring stability in the province and the country as well. Along with my own opinions, I have extracted some important points from an article by Rafiullah Kakar which was published in a national daily.

Firstly, political reconciliations and peace-building must be the foremost priority of our policymakers. No major economic development initiative in the province can succeed without a strategy of peaceful management of ongoing ethnic conflicts. In this regard, the government needs to appreciate the complex landscape of violent conflict in Balochistan. There is a low-scale but ongoing ethnic insurgency mainly in southern Balochistan. The response measures and cosmetic developmental packages have both failed to bring the disaffected Baloch into political mainstream. This domain, therefore, is to be actively explored.

Secondly, the government should prepare a comprehensive



str
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gy for reaching out to Baloch insurgents. This strategy should entail the engagement of credible political voices to lead negotiations and implement CBMs such as stopping military operations, withdrawing the FC personnel from certain areas, releasing all Baloch missing persons and compensating the families of those killed extrajudicially. Thirdly, if the dialogue with the most notorious outfit TTP is possible, then why not with Baloch separatists? A comprehensive parliamentary committee with credible Baloch leaders should be formed for the dialogue. All the constitutional demands of separatists should be accepted and they should be brought to Pakistan with respect. They may also be given amnesty and involved into mainstream politics. Previous efforts to reconcile Baloch insurgents failed because: a) repression went along the reconciliation efforts, and b) those leading the process had little credibility or freedom to make meaningful offers.

Fourthly, ownership in Saindak copper-gold project may be transferred to the Balochistan government as committed under Aghaz-i-Huqooq-i-Balochistan package. Balochistan must be given due share in natural gas by providing each and every area with gas, the Reko Diq agreement should be made public. There should be no demographical changes in Gwadar and involvement of Baloch should be more and encouraged to participate in CPEC project. Jobs in Baloch areas should be only provided to the natives of that specific area.

Fifthly, converting Balochistan into industrial and agricultural hub will engage a lot of youngsters in job and work, industry of dates in Makran belt and fruit factory in Kalat will bring fruitful results. Along with it, education sector must improve; Baloch students must be provided with opportunities to pursue higher education by giving them scholarships. The more Baloch students get involved in professional fields, the more productive Pakistan will be. The quota for Balochistan in competitive exams should be increased – but it must be Baloch-centric – because it will further encourage Baloch youth towards getting education. The enforced disappearances should be ended and people nabbed in way must be presented before the country's judicial system.

Balochistan's share in Benazir Income Support Programme may also be increased to 10 percent at least, from the current four percent. Balochistan's share in NFC Award should also be increased. Moreover, elections in the province must be held in a free and fair manner; there should be no role of any hidden powers in selecting the leadership in the province. ■

The writer is currently pursuing an MBBS degree.

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akistan is facing a formidable economic challenge. The country's trade deficit has soared to \$48.66 billion. The mighty dollar went from PKR166.8 to PKR238.5 in just six months. Inflation is over 40 percent – making an all-time-high record. Long queues of people to buy subsidized flour and sugar are being witnessed daily. Unemployment is crushing the hopes of the youth. Since the government is already running a budgetary deficit of PKR5.5 trillion, it has decided to transfer the burden to the middle class by increasing taxes and reducing subsidies. All looks doom and gloom. The country is desperately looking for a

the Communist victory on the mainland, the biggest challenge was the industrialization of a country which was predominantly an agrarian state. China was left behind by the West after the Industrial Revolution in the 18th century. However, the SOEs helped the Communist Party to develop an industrial base in the country. After

Deng Xiaoping's reforms in 1978, the role of SOEs got transformed. Under the new policy, many sectors of the Chinese economy, e.g. manufacturing, mining, construction, were left to the SOEs.

They were also important in uplifting millions out of poverty because they were willing to invest in remote regions. As many as 91 SOEs from China are on Forbes' Fortune 500 list. Today, China is the world's second largest economy with the largest foreign reserves, and SOEs have a major role in it.

In Pakistan, however, the ongoing discussion is about privatizing of loss-making entities. The government should know that privatization would only loosen its grip over the economy, and it would leave it only with the option of taxation for revenue collection, a measure about which Winston Churchill, the legendary British statesman, rightly said: "I contend that for a nation to try to tax itself into prosperity is like a man standing in a bucket and trying to lift himself by the handle." Besides, many European countries have a long history of running SOEs. Volkswagen, a popular German car brand, was started as an SOE. It has been proven in Europe that SOEs outperform private enterprises in times of crisis. Thus, state-owned enterprises are an asset.

Pakistan can learn from the world. Government-owned companies can generate profits for the government. Moreover, they can export goods and earn valuable foreign exchange. They have the potential to solve the dual crisis, i.e. stagflation and trade deficit. To achieve this, a two-pronged strategy is required. One side is about the enlargement of the government's involvement in key sectors through the creation of new companies. The second side is the reforms in existing public sector companies. Both these sides are

A Case for State-Owned Enterprises In Pakistan

panacea that can help increase exports, achieve socioeconomic stability and raise government revenues. That solution can be State-owned enterprises.

State-Owned Enterprises (often referred to as SOEs) are government-owned corporations. The purpose of an SOE is to generate profit, manage natural resources and control the strategic resources of a country. Some of the largest companies in the world are state-owned; for example, Saudi Aramco, which is the world's most profitable company, is owned by Saudi government. In the USA, Federal National Mortgage Association is a government-owned company. China's 12 largest companies are all state-owned.

Public sector has played a vital role in the rise of China. After

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discussed below.

The government should explore new avenues for investment. In this regard, the principle should be to break private monopolies over natural resources, alleviate the lack of investment in advanced sectors, and control strategic resources.

Monopolies, cartels and mafias are bad for an economy. Sugar is a prime example. Pakistan faces almost every year a shortage of sugar. A large organization with a mandate to produce sugar from sugarcane can solve this issue. It will break the monopoly of sugar manufacturers, and end the practice of price manipulation through hoarding.

High-end manufacturing like semiconductor chip-making is an example of an area where investment is insufficient. It is the future of the industry. Semiconductor chips are used in almost every electronic product and gadget. With the rise of artificial intelligence, the demand for these chips would rise even higher. Currently, Taiwan is the leader in this industry because of its State-owned enterprise. Pakistan can replicate Taiwan in this domain.

Pakistan should take full control of its natural resources. Thar's coal, Balochistan's copper and gold and Gwadar port are given to local and foreign investors. These are

Firstly, these companies should be liberated from political interference. Politicians use jobs in the public sector to appease the voter base. Moreover, CEOs are appointed on the basis of party loyalty. China uses a commission to oversee all the state-owned enterprises. The commission is responsible to the National People's Congress (the legislative body of China), and the chairman is also elected by Congress. Pakistan should replicate this model. Parliamentary oversight through a commission would decrease political interference. Moreover, the commission comprises technical experts which increases efficiency.

Secondly, public sector companies should be subject to national audits. It will counter corruption in state-owned enterprises. The Auditor General of Pakistan is a constitutional institution that can carry out the task.

Thirdly, Pakistan should create a bridge between universities and SOEs. Students in universities should be tasked with research and development. Real-life issues faced by SOEs can be solved by researchers in universities. It will not only help in the upgradation of SOEs but will also enhance the practical knowledge of students.

SOEs have been a success in China and Europe. China's rise is attributed to the success of its SOEs. Many projects



strategic resources that are handed over to Engro, Tethyan Copper Company, and Chinese Overseas Ports Holding Company, respectively. Private companies cannot be trusted with strategic resources. The cases of Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya are warning signs for other developing nations. Despite being rich in oil, rubber, and diamonds, the countries still are under-developed. The reason is that these resources are mined by private companies to maximize their profit. They take all the profit while the government is left with almost nothing. Pakistan should learn from Saudi Arabia, UAE and Iran. These countries have large public sector companies for their oil reserves. The oil profit directly goes into the national exchequer.

It is worth noting that, in Pakistan many state-owned companies already exist, e.g. Pakistan Railways, OGDCL, NBP, ZTBL, WAPDA, Pakistan steel, PSO, and PIA. Instead of generating revenues and increasing exports, these companies are a burden to the national treasury. National Highway Authority (NHA) posted a loss of around 170 million rupees in FY 2019. QESCO faced a loss of almost 37 million rupees. These loss-making entities should be converted into profit-making. For this, the following measures can be taken.

of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor are handled by Chinese SOEs. Chinese Overseas Ports Holding Authority has taken over Gwadar. In Europe, there are also many examples of successful government-owned companies. Volkswagen is one of them. The research at Ghent University shows that SOEs outperform private companies in a crisis. They can also help Pakistan to overcome the economic crisis. Therefore, the government should form new SOEs. High-end manufacturing is an area where the private sector is not willing to invest. The government can fill this gap. Furthermore, public companies working on strategic resources will grant extra control to them. The state also cannot forget the existing SOEs. They are posting losses after losses despite the successes of their counterparts in China. The government should liberate them from political manipulation, and devise a national audit program to fight corruption. Consequently, the government should not privatize public-owned companies; instead it should create new ones and reform the existing ones. ■

The writer is a mechanical engineer, also having an MA degree in political science



Urbanization and environmental problems are the recent developmental issues in Pakistan, the country that has the highest rate of urbanization in South Asia. Since urbanization results in pollution of air, water and land, besides accelerating deforestation, and climate change, if not planned, it can be detrimental to sustainable growth and development. Therefore, sustainable urbanization, which ensures implementation of existing laws, is a better choice.

It is rightly said that there is a direct relationship between the people and their environment because urban people change their environment through their consumption of food, energy, water and land. And, in turn, the polluted urban environment affects the health and quality of life of the urban population. At present, global human population, expansion of mega cities and urban development are increasing at unprecedented rates, creating huge stress on natural resources and environment, as well as on water and air quality. Driven by multiple socioeconomic and environmental processes, the impact of urbanization on environment is profound and multifaceted, generating massive human

fallen at a rate of about 2.6 to 3 feet (0.8 to 0.9 metres beneath) per annum. If the population influx continued with same pace, the current water table of 130 feet is likely to go down to 230 feet by 2025.

This mass migration also resulted in air pollution, land degradation, waste management and sanitation and sewerage problems challenges.

Keeping in view this worsening situation, the Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) in Lahore has now started water rationing by turning off unnecessary water connections and providing water to users during fixed hours.

Similarly, the waste generation also increases with the population influx and, presently, Lahore city generates around 5,600 tons of waste daily that is dumped at Lakhodar and other sites.

Another example is of Faisalabad, where rising population, dumping of industrial waste and effluent mixing with ordinary drains had badly affected the ground water. Traffic mess and its emissions have polluted air and choked drains, resulting in roads-depreciation and adding to the miseries of the people.

Due to industrial and vehicular emissions, the air quality and

Urbanization and Environment

A case of Pakistan's major cities



activity. This tendency deprives communities of greenery and forest cover, damages ecosystem and contaminates air and groundwater with vehicular and industrial emission, construction of roads and houses and use of fossil fuels.

According to UN-Habitat findings, the global community is becoming increasingly urbanized with more than half the population living in cities – and by 2050 two-thirds of the world's people are expected to live in urban areas – exerting extra pressure on resources and multiplying climate change challenges. The United Nations Programme for Human Settlements (UN-Habitat) has been tasked with promoting sustainable development of global cities and towns by maintaining environmental standards through comprehensive urban planning.

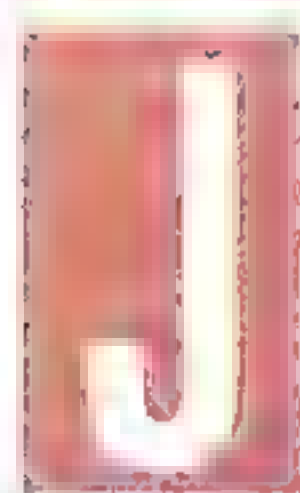
With the massive population influx, the situation of cities in Pakistan is also deteriorating. Unfortunately, Pakistan is one of the countries that have not managed the process of urbanisation effectively. Today, agricultural land is being eaten up by mushrooming housing societies and expanding cities are exerting extra burden on civic amenities like clean-water supply, sanitation and sewerage and roads infrastructure. In Lahore alone, groundwater level, in recent years, has

groundwater had badly been affected in the city. This deterioration is resulting in the spread of kidney, lung and heart diseases and even cancer. We are already touching the scarcity level in terms of per-capita water availability besides challenges of waste disposal, sewerage treatment, vehicular and industrial emissions.

Situation in Karachi is also known to everyone where present rainy spell has badly exposed the administration as its streets and road were seen flooded with sewerage outflow. Air pollution, waste disposal and scant clean drinking water availability are other problems. Tanker mafia charges the resident as per its will and in certain areas, people complaint of their exploitation.

Federal Capital is also not an exception where population increased by 150 percent during year 1998 to 2017. Most of wetlands and green areas have been replaced with towns and housing societies and its nullahs and natural brooks are now flooded with sewage. More than one million vehicles registered with the Islamabad Excise Department are continuously polluting the city's environment. ■

The writer is a member of staff



Jahangir's World Times (JWT): First of all, please tell us about your educational background.

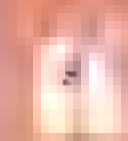
Ghazanfar Perdakh (GP): I completed my school and college education from Unique Public School and College, Chichawatni. After that, I did my bachelors in Computer Science from University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Lahore.

JWT: Since you have been allocated to Pakistan Administrative Service (PAS), what was the feature of this service that attracted you most?

GP: The multidimensional nature of PAS attracted me the most. Being a part of this service, you not only get the chance to serve the public directly at ground level but also the chances to make a broader societal impact through policymaking.

JWT: How was your experience at the World Times Institute?

GP: WTI helps you build a solid conceptual foundation which is crucial for your CSS preparation. Furthermore, the teachers at WTI are really helpful and they always encourage you to think critically.



WTI helps you build a solid conceptual foundation which is crucial for your CSS preparation.



In Conversation with

GHAZANFAR PERDAKH (PAS)

10th in Pakistan - CSS 2021-22

JWT Edit. Board

JWT: What, in your opinion, is the key to making a difference in written part of CSS exam?

GP: The most important thing is practice. People often forget that this is a "written" exam. You may have read a lot of books, but if you do not translate your thoughts into words on paper in an organized manner within the allocated time, you cannot pass the written exam. Therefore, aspirants should focus on improving their writing skills and speed through practice. Just remember "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit."

Furthermore, presentation of paper is also very important and it can turn an average score into a very good one, so aspirants should try to include maps, diagrams, flowcharts and tables to embellish their answers.

JWT: Generally, compulsory subjects are considered low-scoring, what was your strategy to get through these very papers?

GP: It consisted of:

1. Reading latest research papers and journals published by think tanks, like IPRI, ISSI and Congressional Research Service (CRS); rather than relying on outdated material of old books.
2. Staying relevant to the topic at hand and focusing on contemporary events.
3. Substantiating my opinions with authentic facts and figures
4. Presenting case studies to critically analyze an issue and providing viable solutions and remedies.

JWT: What should be an ideal time table for a new aspirant to make sound preparation for CSS exam, and what areas should (s)he focus?

GP: As the Greek maxim goes, "Know

Detailed Marks Sheet

Subject	Marks
Compulsory Subjects	
Essay	40
English Précis & Composition	46
GSA	45
Current Affairs	46
Pakistan Affairs	59
Islamiat	51
Optional Subjects	
Computer Science	131
History of USA	71
Gender Studies	69
International Law	60
Punjabi	73
Total Written	691
Viva Voce	180
Grand Total	871

Rapid Fire

Your inspiration	Fulfilling the life-long dream of my father
Attempts	01
Qualification	BS Computer Science
Alma mater	UET, Lahore
Schooling medium	English
Your study schedule	6-8 hours a day, 6 days a week for 13-14 months
Your sources	FPSC-recommended books, online sources (news articles, journals, research papers)
Academy or Institute you joined	World Times Institute (for interview)
Group preferences	PAS
Why PAS?	Multidimensional nature
Hobbies	Reading books, watching documentaries
Fave personality	Malcolm X
Fave book	Crime and Punishment by Fyodor Dostoevsky
Fave quote	"Cogito, ergo sum." (I think, therefore I am) — Rene Descartes
Secret of your success	Perseverance and faith in Allah
Your role model	Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ

My Tips

Scoring trend should not be your primary criterion for choosing an optional subject as it changes every year. Choose subjects that pique your interest and also match your degree subjects.

Identify the various dimensions of each topic from the past papers and make comprehensive notes which cover all the dimensions of that topic in detail.

Shorten your notes to one-pagers and try to take as many mock exams as you can.

directly from the question. This technique will facilitate the examiner in assessing your paper and will give an impression that you fully understand the question along with its various aspects, and are addressing them all one by one in the answer. Make sure to use markers, margins, diagrams, maps and flowcharts to embellish your answers.

JWT: Should there be some word limit kept in mind while writing answers?

GP: There is no word limit as such but a good answer should have a minimum of 6 pages and maximum of 10 pages.

JWT: How did you structure your Essay and what was your strategy for Précis and Composition Paper?

GP: For Essay:

1. Introduction

Starting with an anecdote to attract the examiner's interest and ending the paragraph with my thesis statement. Thesis statement should clearly express your stance on the topic and it should not be generic.

2. Body Paragraphs

a. Definition/Explanation of topic (if required)


b. Presenting the opposing view to my stance in thesis

statement

c. Arguments in favour of, and refuting the arguments presented in opposition to, my stance

3. Way forward/recommendations

4. Conclusion

For Précis and Composition, the key is to attempt the past papers and have your work assessed by subject experts. 

My Interview Experience

Interview is not only a test of your knowledge but also of your personality and character. It is important that you answer questions correctly but what matters most to the panellists is how you react after you drop some questions. Do you keep your composure and stay calm and confident or do you start getting nervous and let these dropped questions affect the rest of your interview? My advice to aspirants is that it's OK even if you drop some questions but don't lose your composure and stay calm and always maintain eye contact with the panellists. Furthermore, if you have only superficial knowledge of a subject, you won't be able to impress the panellists. For example, I was asked by a panellist about the Battle of Waterloo and after answering the question, I added that this is where the idiom "meet one's Waterloo" originated because Napoleon suffered his decisive defeat at Waterloo. The panellist was pleasantly surprised to hear that and that particular interviewer did not ask any more questions.

Overall, the interview was a great experience and I felt very comfortable. The key to success in interview is to maintain your composure.

thyself;" aspirants should first do a careful introspection to determine their strengths and weaknesses and then make a timetable, accordingly, which suits them best. Insofar as the second part of your question is concerned, I would advise new aspirants to build a solid knowledge base and develop a yearning for learning. Most aspirants face difficulty in developing the reading habit; this is because they are not interested in the subject matter and they often find it boring and tedious and thus end up cramming the subject without developing a conceptual clarity. That is why when they are asked to critically examine a situation/topic in exams, they fail to do so owing to their lack of deeper understanding of the topic. So, I would encourage new aspirants to read books, journals, watch political documentaries and infographic videos on YouTube to develop a solid knowledge base.

JWT: How answers should be written to get maximum marks?

GP: The most important thing is relevancy. If you try to fill the pages with irrelevant stuff, you'll be penalized by the examiner. Be precise and relevant. Another important thing is to take headings and subheadings

Advice for Fresh Aspirants

CSS is a long, arduous and tiresome journey. So, it is important to take care of your physical and mental health. Take breaks and relax whenever required. Always maintain a balance in life.

Iran-Russia Energy Deal

BookishBanda



Why the deal matters

The issue of increasing Russian-Iranian cooperation in the economic sphere is especially relevant in the light of the tightening of Western sanctions against Russia. It is to be remembered here that Iran has the world's second-largest gas reserves after Russia, but US sanctions have prevented access to extraction technology and slowed development of gas exports.

The investment pledge is a sign of continued Russian support for Iran, particularly in the economic sphere. In June, the two countries agreed to establish mutual trade centers. Recently, Iran facilitated a large cargo shipment from Russia en route to India.

The deal also demonstrates how Western sanctions have brought the two countries together. Iran is sanctioned by the United States due to its alleged pursuit of a nuclear weapon and support for designated terrorist groups. Russia has been sanctioned by the United States and the European Union in response to the invasion of Ukraine.

It should not be forgotten that the Russian economy, like the

Iranian economy, is under very heavy sanctions, the Central Bank assets of this country are largely confiscated by Western countries, and the opportunities to use credit from international financial markets are restricted. Although Russia does not have a very sharp budget problem due to high energy prices and energy exports continue, albeit with cuts, for the time being, there is a high probability of gradual savings in the financing of foreign energy projects in the new period.

If cooperation and even integration between Russia and Iran in the field of energy are continued successfully, new balances can be formed in terms of supply in the global energy markets.

Analysis

The cooperation between Iran and

Recently, the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) and Russian state-controlled energy giant Gazprom signed a memorandum of understanding which includes investments of \$40 billion in oil and natural gas projects. The MoU provides for the development of Kish and North Pars gas fields, pressure enhancement of South Pars gas field, development of six oil fields, gas and product swap, completion of LNG projects, construction of gas export pipelines, and other scientific and technological cooperation. Gazprom will also be involved in the completion of liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects and construction of gas export pipelines.

Zafrullah Saroya

Russia in the fields of energy and transportation is determined by the new realities and conjunctural conditions in the regional geopolitical order, and they carry out this cooperation in coordination and synchronization according to the current conditions. In addition to the oil and natural gas cooperation agreements, the construction of the Rasht-Astara railway line and the electrification of the Garmsar-Inche Burun Railway line are also on the agenda. By doing so, it is planned to increase the combined capacity of Iran in the field of sea, rail and land transport for the re-export of Russian oil products and even food products. Here, it is possible to mention a diversified use of both the direct Caspian Sea route and transit

routes through Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan. So, it seems that with the help of the new agreements signed before and to be signed later, the energy cooperation between the two countries is developing in line with acting more coordinately on the basis of the win-win principle. ■



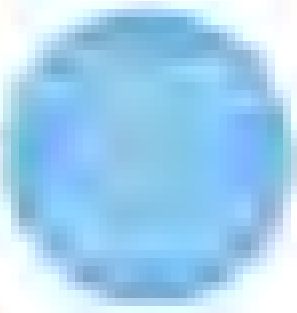


THE LARGEST HEARTED BILLIONAIRE

American tech magnate, investor & philanthropist Bill Gates was born on Oct. 28, 1955

Bill Gates with his wife Melinda, as they celebrate their 35th anniversary. The couple has three children: Jennifer, Rory, and Phoebe.

Established the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in 2000. The foundation has been instrumental in the fight against malaria, polio, and HIV/AIDS.



VICTORIAN ERASIMUS

Erasmus of Rotterdam was a Dutch philosopher, Christian theologian, and writer. He is known for his satirical work, *The Praise of Folly*, and his translation of the Bible into Latin.



FATHER OF NUCLEAR PHYSICS

J. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER
OCT. 20, 1894

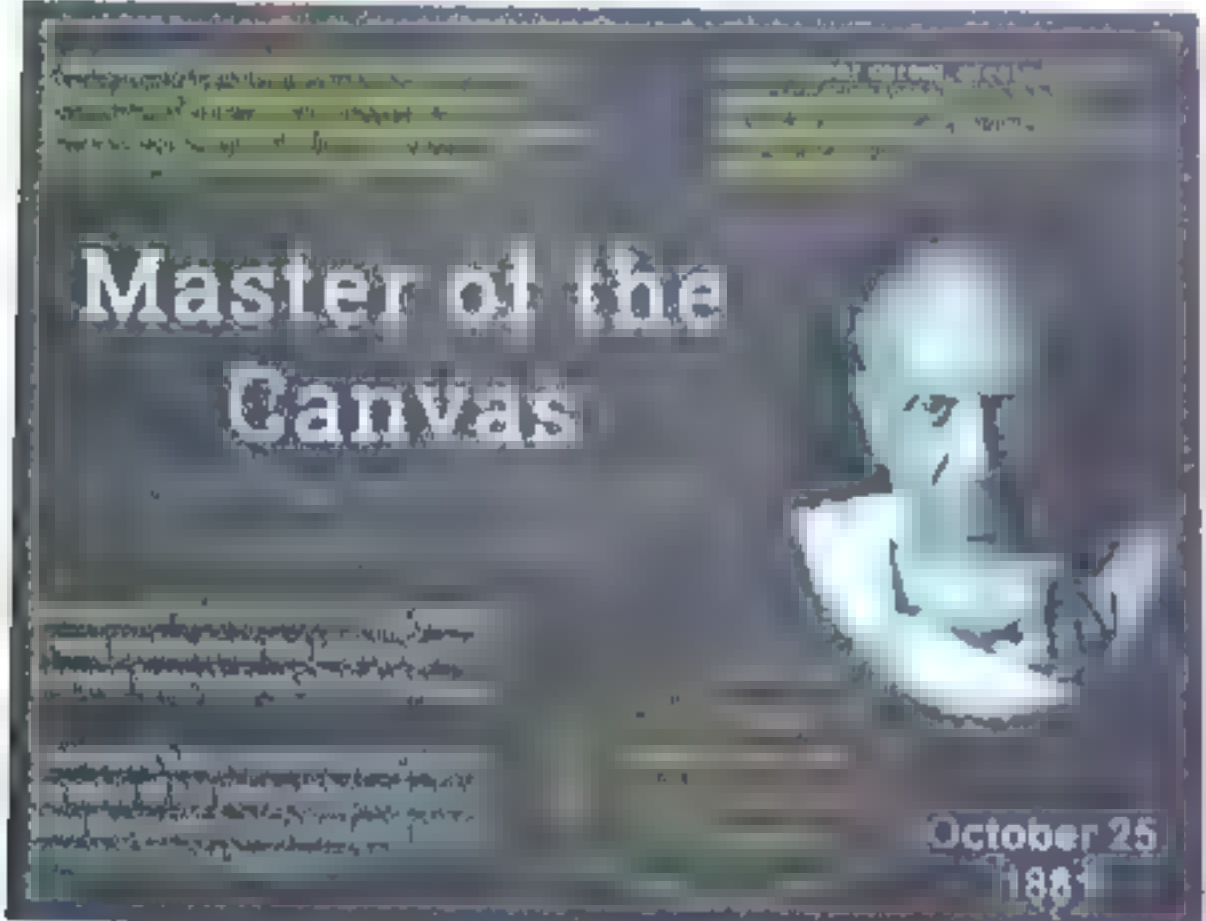
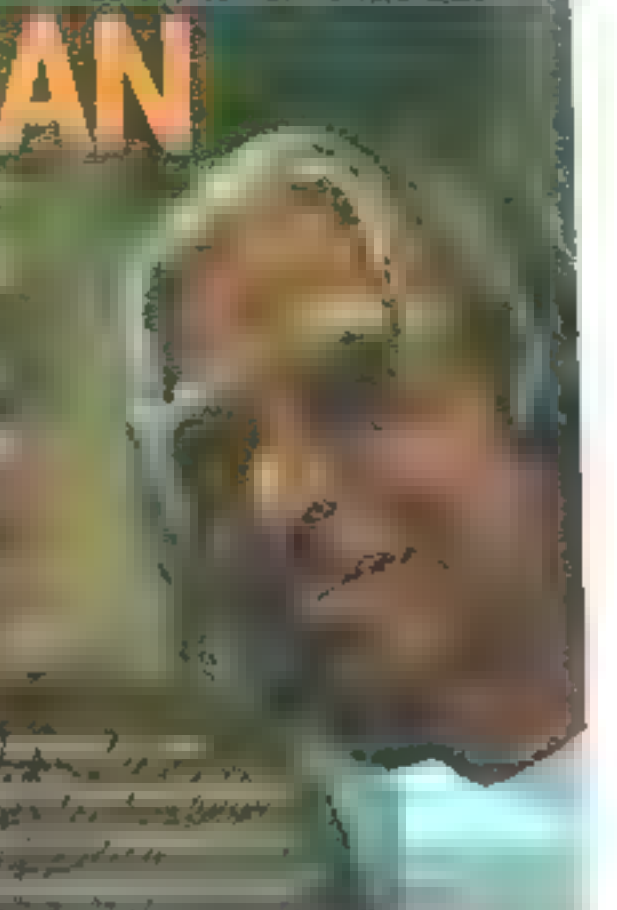
Proved the existence of a critical mass of fissile material. He was the director of the Los Alamos Laboratory during the Manhattan Project.

He is known for his leadership in the development of the atomic bomb during World War II.

MISSILE MAN

Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, 11th President of India, was born on Oct. 15, 1931

He was the first Indian to become the President of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). He is known for his book *Wings of Fire*.



Master of the Canvas

October 25, 1881



Oct 13, 1943



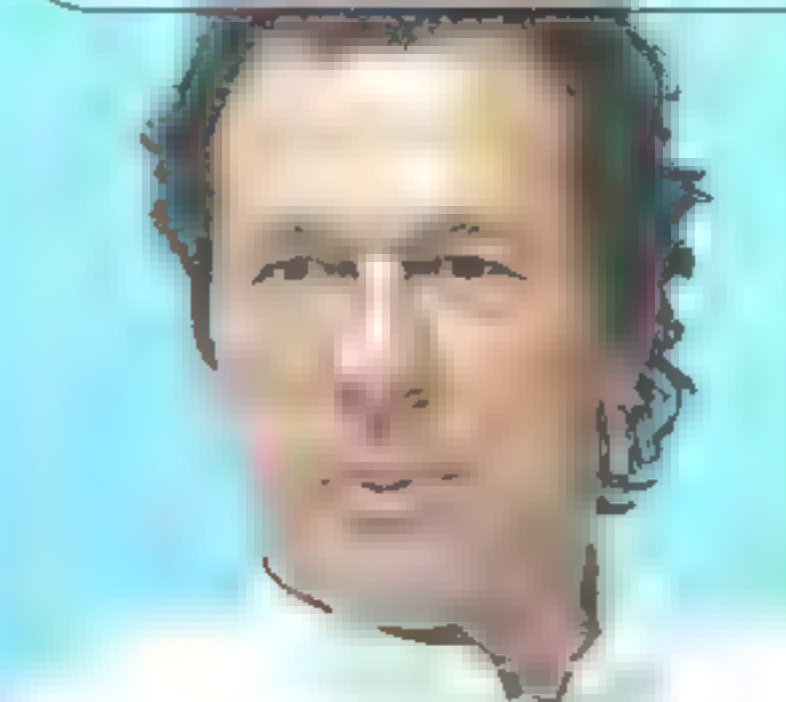
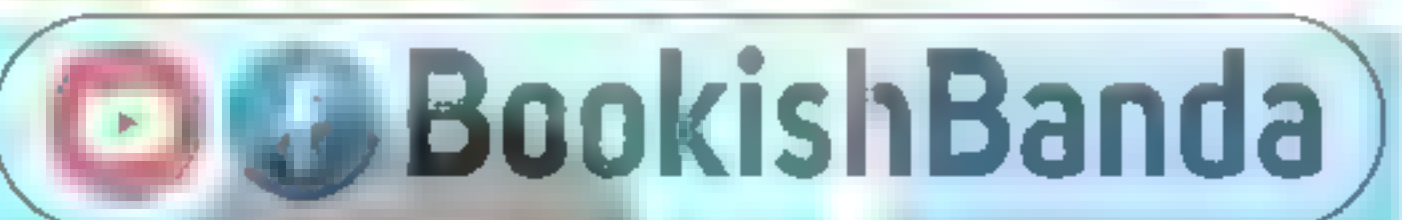
French engineer & industrialist LOUIS JEAN LUMIERE was born on Oct. 5, 1846

THE FIRST FILMMAKER

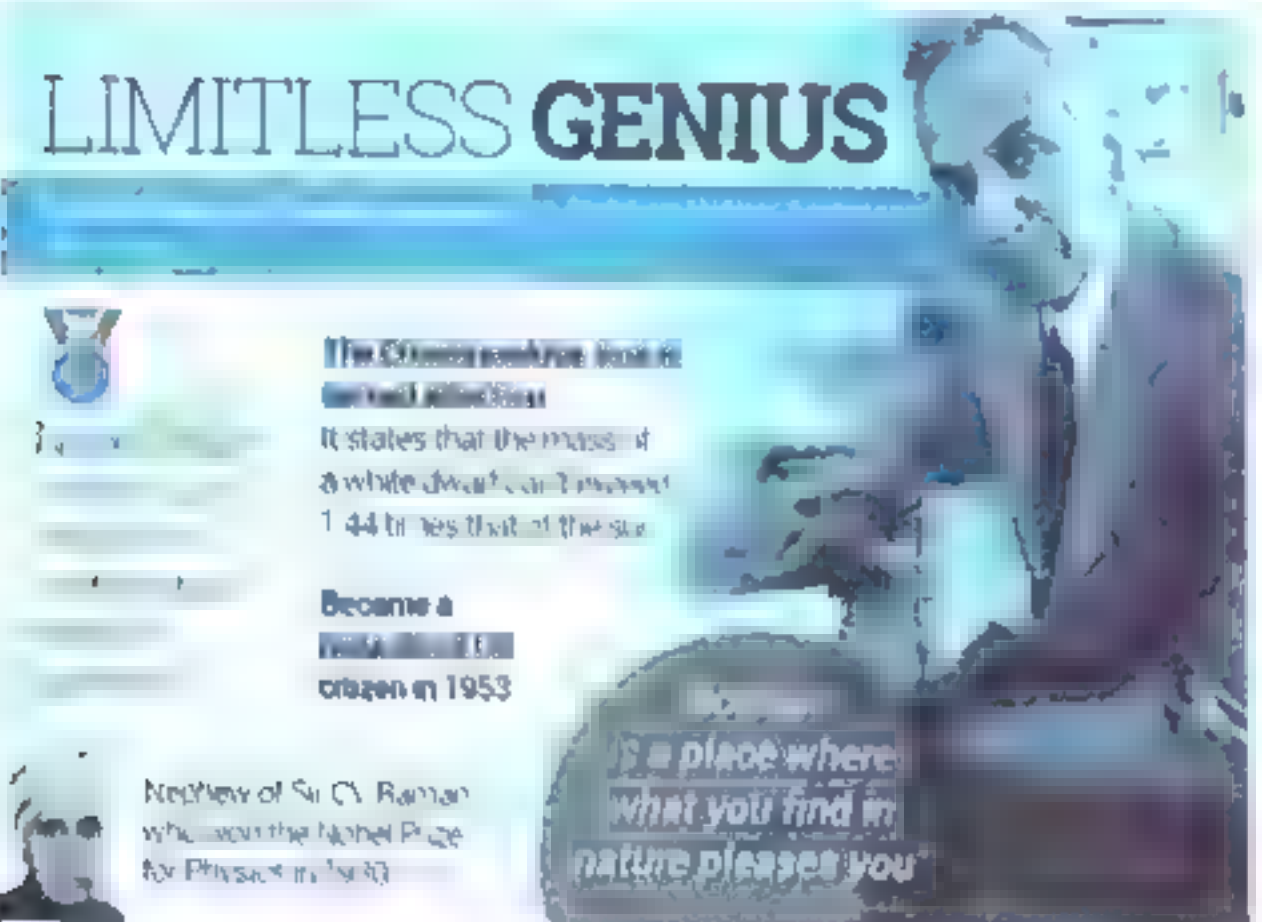
The first true motion picture, *Lumiere's Train Entering a Station*, was shot by him and his brother Auguste in 1894.

At the age of 17, he developed the dry photographic plate or the blue label plate.

Also invented the Cinematograph motion picture camera in 1895.



Oct 05, 1952



LIMITLESS GENIUS

The *Chronicles of Stephen Hawking* book series. It states that the mass of a white dwarf can compress 144 times that of the sun.

Became a naturalized British citizen in 1953.

"It's a place where what you find in nature pleases you"



Won the Academy Award

The Godfather

His first book, *The Dark Arena*, was published in 1955.

Worked as a public relations officer in Germany for the military during World War II.



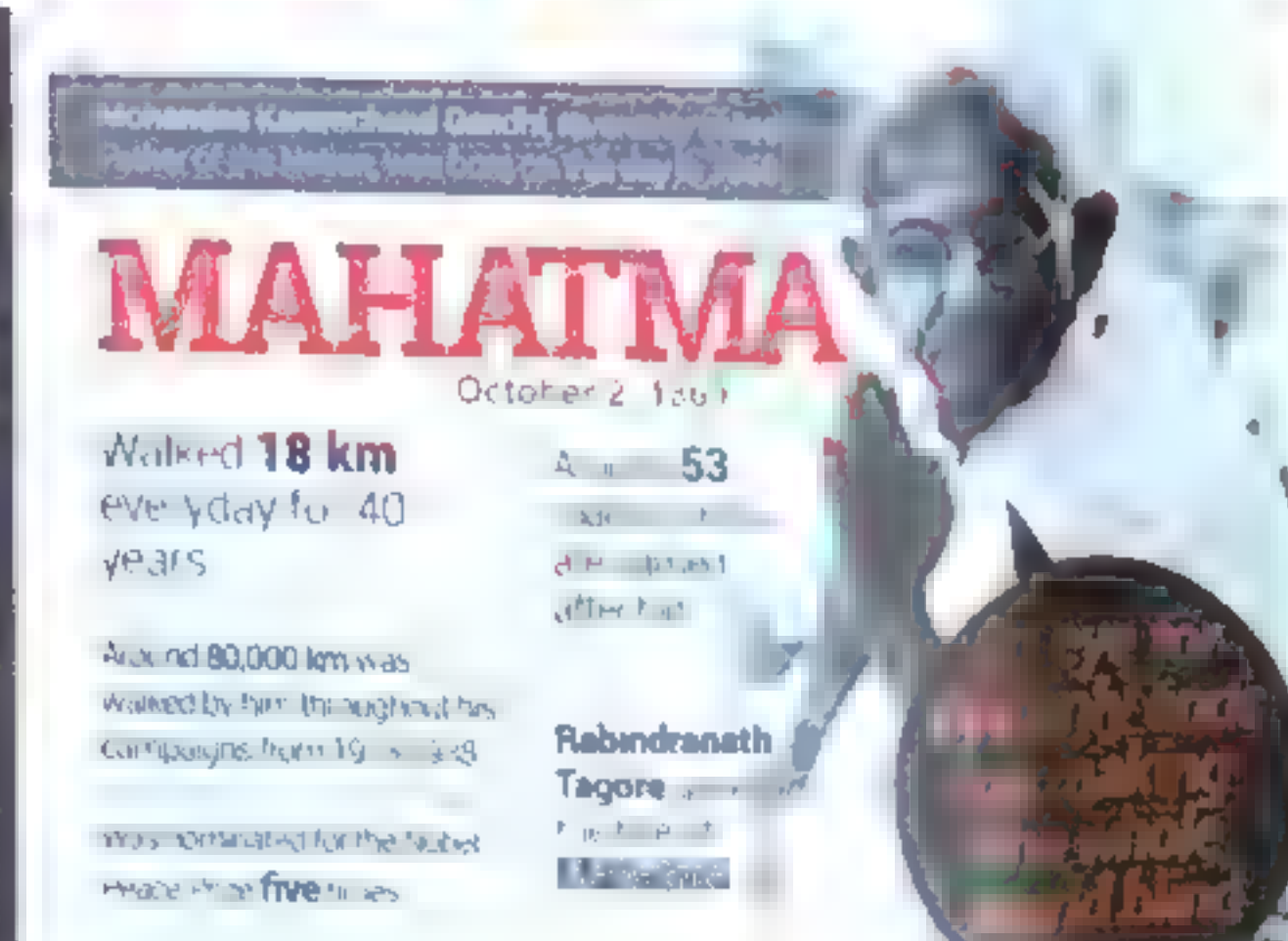
AS ITCH IN TIME



THE FIRST FILMMAKER

Developed the dry photographic plate or the blue label plate with his father.

Invented the Cinematograph motion picture camera in 1895.



MAHATMA

October 2, 1869

Walked 18 km everyday for 40 years.

Around 80,000 km was walked by him throughout his campaigns from 1919 to 1948.

was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize five times.

Age: 53

Age: 53

Age: 53

Age: 53

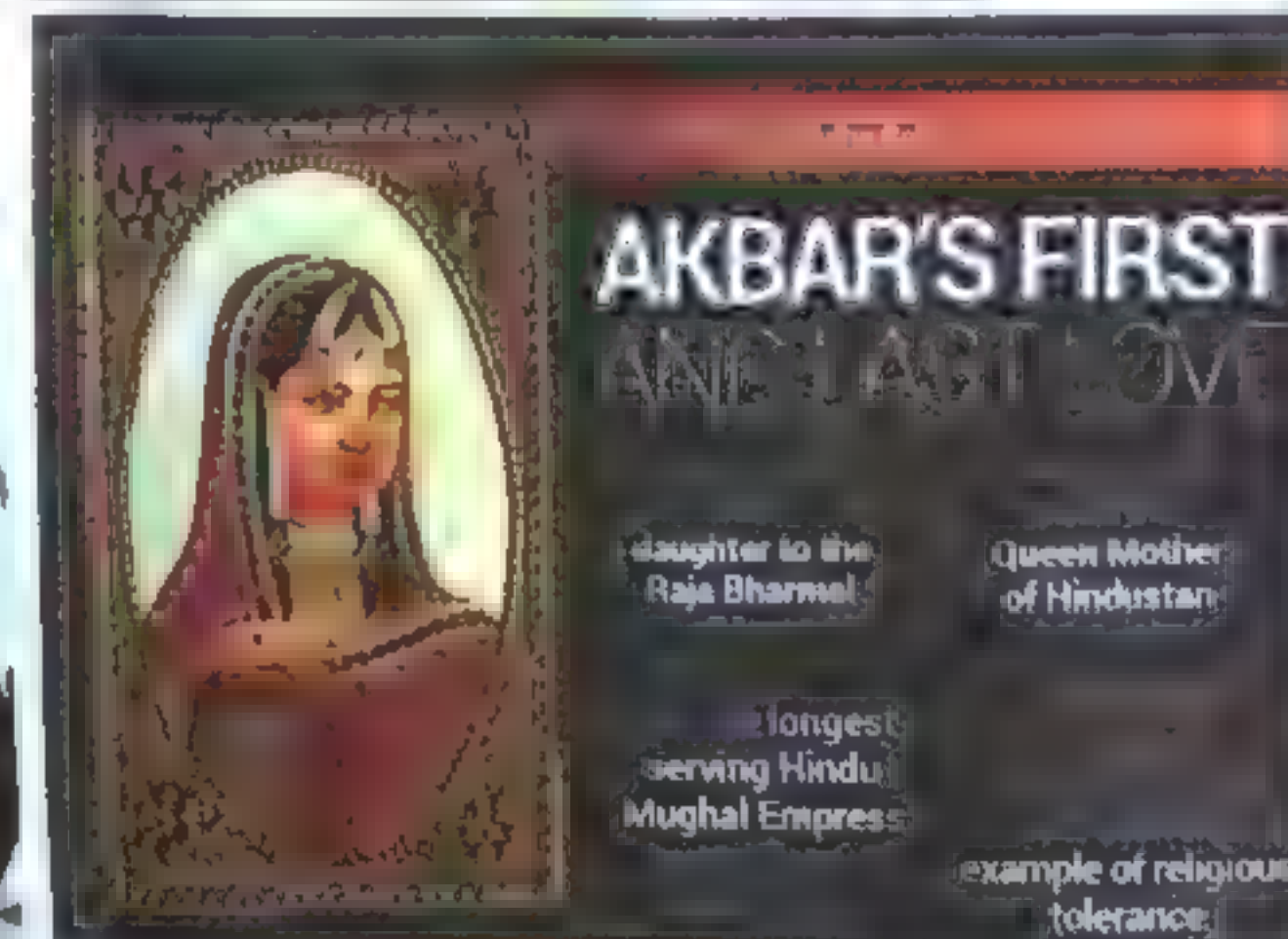
Age: 53

Age: 53

Age: 53

Age: 53

Age: 53



AKBAR'S FIRST AND LAST LOVE

daughter to the Raja Bharmal

Queen Mother of Hindustan

longest serving Hindu Mughal Empress

example of religious tolerance



October 15, 1994

FAMOUS PEOPLE BORN IN OCTOBER



On
Sept.

1 4
of the European

Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, in her annual State of the Union speech, announced the intention of creating a new 'European Hydrogen Bank' that is potentially a game-changing development for the bloc's hydrogen sector. Ms der Leyen hinted that the bank would "guarantee" purchases of hydrogen to create certainty of demand, using seed capital from the €38bn Innovation Fund. "We need to move our hydrogen economy from niche to scale," she told her audience in the European Parliament, adding that "[H]ydrogen can be a game changer for Europe. We need to move our hydrogen economy from niche to scale. With REPowerEU, we have doubled our 2030 target to produce ten million tons of renewable hydrogen in the EU, each year. To achieve this, we must create a market maker for hydrogen, in order to bridge the investment gap and connect future supply and demand. That is why I can today announce that we will create a new European Hydrogen Bank."

Purpose

The new European Hydrogen Bank will guarantee the purchase of hydrogen, notably by using resources from the Innovation Fund, through an investment of €3 billion to help build the future market for hydrogen. As per the REPowerEU – the European Commission's plan to make Europe independent from Russian fossil fuels – the European Union will strive to achieve a supply of twenty million tons (20Mt) of green hydrogen – 10Mt produced and 10Mt imported – by 2030 that are echoed by the new binding targets for different sectors:

- renewable fuels of non-biological origin (RFNBO) at least 5.7% of all fuels by 2030, including 1.2% in the hard-to-abate maritime sector;
- 50% of the industry to transition to green hydrogen by 2030 (70% by 2035).

This will help ramp up the sector and make hydrogen a key component of Europe's green energy strategy. Additionally, for the transport sector, greenhouse gas intensity reductions of at least 16% have been set by 2030. These are strong signals that Europe is committed to de-carbonising the continent.

President
Commission,

Hydrogen will have a vital role to play in this initiative.

Hydrogen

Hydrogen is the simplest element. Each atom of hydrogen has only one proton. Hydrogen is also the most abundant element in the universe. Stars such as the sun consist mostly of hydrogen. The sun is essentially a giant ball of hydrogen and helium gases. Hydrogen occurs naturally

European Hydrogen Bank

on Earth only in compound form with other elements in liquids, gases or solids. Hydrogen combined with oxygen is water (H₂O). Hydrogen combined with carbon forms different compounds — or hydrocarbons — found in natural gas, coal and petroleum.

As source of energy

Because hydrogen does not exist freely in nature and is only produced from other sources of energy, it is known as an energy carrier and it can deliver or store a tremendous amount of energy. It is a clean-burning fuel, and when combined with oxygen in a fuel cell, hydrogen produces heat and electricity with only water vapor as a by-product. Today, hydrogen is most commonly used in petroleum refining and fertilizer production, while transportation and utilities are emerging markets.

Types

Hydrogen can be produced — separated — from a variety of sources including water, fossil fuels or biomass.

Green hydrogen: It is produced by electrolysis of water using renewable energy (like solar, wind) and has a lower carbon footprint. Electricity splits water into hydrogen and oxygen.

Brown hydrogen: It is produced using coal where the emissions are released into the air.

Grey hydrogen: It is produced from natural gas where the associated emissions are released into the air.

Blue hydrogen: It is produced from natural gas, where the emissions are captured using carbon capture and storage.

Importance for EU

Hydrogen forms a key part of the European Green Deal, which is the EU's long-term growth path to make Europe climate neutral by 2050. This target is enshrined in the European Climate Law, as well as the legally binding commitment to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030, compared with 1990 levels. The bloc has doubled its 2030 target to produce ten-million tons a year of renewable hydrogen in the EU. This domestic target, combined with hydrogen imports of ten-million tons a year, would replace natural gas, coal and oil in hard-to-carbonise industries and transport sectors. 📺

J

ahangir's World Times (JWT) last of all, please tell us about your educational background?

Haseeb ur Rehman (HuR): I got my early education from Kasur Public School (now DPS, Kasur). After that,

we moved to Lahore and I joined Divisional Public School there from where I did my matriculation and got a gold medal from my school for securing over 90% marks. Afterwards, I did my Intermediate from GCU, Lahore, in Commerce (I.Com) and topped my class in the year 2012. I graduated from the same institution with a gold medal and a Roll of Honour, in 2016.

JWT: How much helpful did you find Jahangir's World Times (JWT) in your preparation for PMS exam? And, how was your experience at World Times Institute (WTI)?

HuR: JWT was an immense help to me during my entire journey of preparation. It provided me with up-to-date analyses of major events that were fine-tuned to the demands of the exams. Moreover, it was also my go-to source for almost every subject I opted for in PMS.

Moreover, the support and guidance provided during my interview preparation at WTI was really helpful in getting through the final interview.

JWT: What, in your opinion, is the key

to clearing the compulsory papers of PMS exam? Is it more than that of General Knowledge?

HuR: Preparation for compulsory subjects, especially GK, can be tricky. First of all, my focus was on covering the topics given in the course outline by preparing concise notes and then fine-tuning them by looking at past papers. It also came in focusing on the essentials and preparing myself for the exams.

Moreover, I consulted some reference books and monthly JWT. Moreover, I tried to understand GK in a form of narrative; it was especially helpful in history section. I also focused on preparing notes for different parts of GK.

JWT: How answers should be written to get maximum marks in the written part of PMS exam?

HuR: I think the entire focus of one's preparation should be on developing, refining and sharpening one's question-attempting skills. At the end of the day, it can be the ultimate game-changer. The question should be attempted in a way that covers all the aspects given in the question statement. A good answer should be well structured, well referenced and based upon sound analysis. Moreover, judicious use of aids like graphs, tables, charts, maps, etc. should also be made.

JWT: Your marks in Essay are pretty good, how did you structure that?

HuR: Essay, being the most crucial and essential part of the competitive exams, requires special attention on the part of aspirants as far as preparation is concerned as without practicing essay writing, one cannot think of getting through this important paper. Insofar as my strategy for writing the essay is concerned, I took care to address all the aspects touched upon in the topic and developed an outline which showed the way my argument would unfold. Moreover, I tried to write well structured paragraphs with logical arguments and close symbiotic relation between different parts of the essay.

JWT: Since you have scored excellent marks in History and Punjabi what was your strategy for both these



BookishBanda

The support and guidance provided during my interview preparation at WTI was really helpful in getting through the final interview.

In Conversation with
Haseeb ur Rehman
2016 in Punjab,
PMS 2020-21

Detailed Marks Sheet

Subject	Marks
Compulsory Subjects	
English Essay	65
English (Précis & Composition)	73
General Knowledge	57.25
Urdu	75
Pakistan Affairs	47
Islamic Studies	76
Optional Subjects	
History	130
Sociology	132
Punjabi	124
Total Written	779.25
Viva Voce	131.6
Grand Total	910.85

papers?

HuR: For History paper, I consulted multiple sources, especially books by authors having good academic credentials, so that my ultimate answers would stand out from others attempting the same question. I also tried to incorporate as much sound analyses of historical events as was possible.

For Punjabi, I tried to imbibe and learn as much references of Punjabi poetry as I could and also focused on developing my Punjabi-writing skills.

JWT: Should there be some word limit kept in mind while writing answers?

HuR: I think a good answer should focus on developing a coherent and well-structured reproduction of the knowledge which covers all the aspects mentioned in the question statement. Having said that, I think a good answer can vary between 8 and 10 pages.

JWT: Is it better to attempt optional papers in Urdu or one should go with English only?

HuR: Again, I think it's a matter of personal choice and preference. The decision has to be made while keeping in mind one's background, one's writing speed, the legibility of one's script and writing, etc.

JWT: How one should choose Optional Subjects?

HuR: The decision on choosing the optional subjects should be made carefully as this will ultimately affect the final outcome. One should keep one's own interests, academic background, the length of the course outline, overall nature of the subject(s) at

top and see how one particular subject overlaps or complements other subjects. Moreover, one should also keep in mind the availability of good mentors for the subject one wants to opt for.


JWT: Who deserves the credit for your success?

HuR: First of all, my success owes itself to the bounties, blessings and favours of Allah Almighty without whose providence I wouldn't have been here.

Secondly, care, diligence, hard work and perseverance with which my parents trained me to face the challenges of life is behind my place and position today. They provided me with everything I could wish for and even think of - a debt I doubt I will be able to pay back ever.

Last but not least, I would like to pay my gratitude and thanks to the efforts and guidance of Sir Dr Sajjad Ali, Sir Dr Waheed Osmani, and Sir Amanullah Gondal for getting me through this journey.

JWT: As interviewers usually grill the interview candidates, how did you manage the situation?

HuR: I would agree with the part that interview can be a gruesome task for most aspirants. But, I think - and this is what I tried to do - keeping oneself cool and composed during the process is of great importance. Moreover, keeping one's answer focused and precise can also help smooth the entire process. 

My Interview Experience

Overall, my experience was a good one. Obviously, I was nervous and had many things crossing my mind at that time but once the interview began, the things started rolling, and the kind attitude of the panellists helped a lot. The interview revolved around different topics like history, philosophy, current affairs and events, and some other topics as well. Overall, it lasted for 45-50 minutes.



Rapid Fire

Your inspiration	My parents
Attempts	01
Schooling medium	English
Your qualification	BA (Hons) English Literature
Alma mater	GCU, Lahore
Your study schedule	6-8 hours a day, with focus on reading and preparing notes
Your sources	Books by subject specialists, articles from different local and international journals
Your hobbies	Watching movies and TV shows, reading books, playing badminton, cycling
Your strength	Ability to understand ideas and content in a connected way with focus on sound analysis
Fave personality	Otto von Bismarck, Henry Kissinger
Fave book	A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man by James Joyce and The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald
Fave quote	"So we beat on, boats against the current borne back ceaselessly into the past." (from The Great Gatsby)
Secret of your success	Focused hard work with consistency, faith in Allah and support of my parents
Your role model	Sir Dr. Irfan Waheed Osmani & Sir Dr Sajjad Ali

My Tips on:

Selection of optional subjects

1. Focus on interests and academic background
2. Opt carefully
3. Cover the subject in its entirety

Revision

1. Prepare short notes while revising
2. Focus on essentials

Making Notes

1. Prepare detailed notes
2. Cover all the topics
3. Internalize and practice what is in the notes

J

ahangir's World Times (JWT): Please tell us about your educational background

Faran Khalid (FK): I completed my primary and intermediate education from Hafizabad. After that, I graduated from University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore, in Geological Engineering. I completed my second bachelors in civil engineering from the same institute, later on.

JWT: How long did it take you to prepare for the Assistant Section Officer (S&GAD) exam?

FK: This is really a tricky question. Although I secured 7th position in 'Inspector Customs' examination, I prepared for it in a very short time of just two weeks as I was, in those days, preparing to appear in final exams of the last semester of my second bachelor's degree. However, my preparation was very direct as it was only syllabus-orientated and was based, to a large extent, on the analysis of past papers.

For the descriptive paper, the time available for preparation was about three weeks. I allotted one week each to Current Affairs/Pak Affairs, English and Islamic Studies, respectively.

JWT: What were your principal resources?

FK: My principal resources were very diverse.

For screening exam

1. Past papers (I analyzed how the examiner sets the paper)
2. Different online sources
3. MCQs published every month in JWT magazine

For descriptive exam

It was a tough nut to crack. I followed a very direct approach after FPSC uploaded the syllabus for this post. Since it was mostly based on current affairs, I checked the Current Affairs past papers of CSS, then shortlisted the dimensions and did a directed study. Sources I used for this part included:

1. Al Jazeera and Dawn articles
2. For domestic affairs, JWT magazine
3. CFR articles

JWT: How was your experience at World Times Institute during your preparations?

FK: It was a very good experience. I learnt a lot here. WTI is like a second home to me. I first joined it to prepare for CSS examination, and later returned to the Institute for the interview session. It was very helpful

"The exceptional results achieved by Faran Khalid are a blessing as they are proof of the quality of the JWT Institute."

Congratulations with

Faran Khalid

Inspector of Customs Intelligence Office
Federal Board of Revenue



indeed. The rigorous mock interview sessions were a blessing as they prepared me for the final interview. Tips shared by the mock interview panellists really made me aware of my weaknesses and motivated me to work on them. Especially, Sir Azmat and Sir Ahsan helped me a lot to find the correct approach to tackle the difficult questions.

JWT: How new aspirants should start preparations for the various one-paper exams?

FK: New aspirants should start making preparations right after the publication of the advertisement. They should not wait for the announcement of exam date and should start their preparation as early as possible.

JWT: What areas should (s)he focus?

FK: This is a very important question. The main focus should be on English, Current Affairs and Mathematics as examiners now mostly focus on the aforementioned areas. If aspirants work on these three portions, it will set them apart from the rest of the lot of their fellows.

JWT: What is, in your opinion, an ideal time table for a sound preparation?

FK: An ideal time table to ace any one-paper exam is between 40 and 60 days for a beginner and 30-45 days for an average aspirant.

JWT: What strategy should the in-job aspirants adopt as they have scant time at their disposal?

FK: Well, in-job aspirants need to show determination if they want to achieve their goals. If you are doing a full-day job, you still have time in the evenings. Five hours a day can be a game-changer for your fate as hard work yields results. Believing in your own self is essential as well. So, instead of wasting time on social media sites, use your phone in a productive way and diversify your knowledge, study in your break hours,

travelling times, etc. Just never give up on your dreams

JWT: How did you handle the interview pressure while before the panel?

FK: To be honest, I was much motivated and relatively calm. Being an engineer, I have gone through the process of viva voces during my degree, so it was a similar experience. Plus, the rigorous mock interviews at WTI did the trick. I have strong belief that if anything is meant for me, it will come to me. As Allah SWT has taken the responsibility of your Rizq, I wasn't worried at all. This belief put my heart to ease. I did my part of sincere hard work and left the outcome to Allah.

JWT: Please share some questions the panellists asked during the interview?

FK: My interview was a bit lengthy; it consisted of three sections. First section was introductory, about me and my educational background. Second section was about customs and Customs Act of Pakistan while the final section was about G.K. It included questions from Current Affairs, Pak Affairs, EDS and Islamic Studies.

JWT: On the basis of your experience, what tips you would give to the prospective aspirants?

FK: Be honest with yourself and focus on your weak areas because only then can you overcome your shortcomings. Nowadays, you need to diversify your knowledge bank as examiners are setting tricky papers. Use multiple sources for preparation instead of mindlessly cramming past papers. Last but not least, our generation should learn the importance of prayers. Keep your parents happy and take good care of them and I can guarantee that you will achieve true success due to their prayers. As success is not permanent and failure is not final, so don't ever stop trying. ■



How many times does it happen that you make an aim to achieve a goal, then plan and motivate yourself and decide that you will start working for that the next morning or the next Monday? But guess what, when the time arrives to do action, procrastination sneaks up on you. Slowly and gradually, you fell into the trap of putting things on hold and that next morning or next Monday never arrives – in fact, no one is immune to it. Here are some actionable pieces of advice that can help you combat procrastination.



PROCRASTINATION

How to overcome it?

Rokhana Riaz

Forget the past and stop feeling guilty

A vast body of research has proved that the more you forgive yourself and forget about the past procrastination, the more you will be able to complete your tasks – and, of course, to procrastinate less. Sticking to the past and having thoughts like 'I always procrastinate' or 'I am not good enough' doesn't let you come out of the past and focus on the current goal. Try self-compassion instead of self-criticism. Take a fresh start. In the start, you will make mistakes; it will not be perfect, but taking one small goal at a time will get you there.

Find designated space and time

Space and time is of utmost importance when it comes to achieving your goals and stop procrastinating. You must find a space where there are no distractions which can be an unorganized space, a tech device like phone, tablet or TV, people, pets, and there is a long list. Creating a work-friendly environment will keep you focused.

Secondly, know yourself, know your mind. Identify what time of the day or night you are able to be more focused and have more potential to work. Everybody is different. Every individual has a different body and mind. Some may work at high potential at midnight and some in the early morning. When you start working to achieve your goals in a right space at the right time, your potential maximizes and there is no room left for procrastination.

10-minutes miracle

Mostly, we procrastinate from initiating the work; once we get started, we are able to attain our goals. For that purpose, when you procrastinate about starting work, just set 10 minutes time and resolve 'I have to just do it for 10 minutes'. For instance, if you are procrastinating about writing a whole essay, just tell yourself I am going to write for 10 minutes and then I will stop. Once you start writing, you get involved and end up writing the whole essay.

Eat biggest frog first

As Mark Twain famously said, "Eat a live frog first thing in the morning and nothing worse will happen to you the rest of the day." Often times, the more difficult the task, the more you

procrastinate. You do the easy stuff first and then wait and procrastinate for the harder tasks. Therefore, it is best to start with the difficult tasks first and then the rest will be easy and you will not procrastinate.

One-hour power

According to this rule, give yourself one hour. Avoid any distractions or socialization during this time. Just focus and finish your task. Tell yourself 'After this one hour, I will take break and enjoy the time'. This will help you in reaching your goal. Also, during the free time, you will not be thinking and stressing about the goals that you have been procrastinating about.

5-second rule

According to Mel Robbins, a human mind has a 5-second window. If you get up and start your goals in five seconds, you will be able to attain it; otherwise, after 5 seconds, your brain will start thinking and those thoughts will make you procrastinate. For instance, if it is difficult to wake up early for studying, set an alarm. And, when it rings and you wake up, count 1,2,3,4, and on 5, you must be out of the bed. If you fail to do so, your mind will tell you it is cold out there, sleep for 10 more minutes, etc. and it leads to procrastination.

Know the actual reason of procrastination

Everybody has some reason for procrastination. Find the real reason. For some, it may be doing too many things at a time while, for others, it may be health issues, or some other genuine reason. Find out that reason and work on that. Once that is solved, you will be more focused and will not procrastinate.

Rokhana Riaz is an inspirational writer and digital content creator.





After having taught CSS/PMS Essay for more than a decade, I am of the view that aspirants need to burnish a number of skills if they want to ensure success in their Essay paper. In my write-ups for the readers of JWT magazine, I would be delineating all the necessary skills one by one. To start with, let's discuss the intricacies involved in topic selection in CSS/PMS Essay paper.

Types of Topics

Mostly, the topics that are given in CSS Essay paper are issue-based. These issues may relate to political, social, economic, religious or administrative sectors and can either be Pakistan-specific or global in nature. At times, there are some literary topics as well.

Dos and Don'ts of Topic Selection

1. Aspirants are advised to avoid literary topics as they are usually oblique and indecipherable in nature, and it usually becomes difficult to comprehend and expand them to the satisfaction of the examiner. Some examples of literary topics from the CSS past papers are as under:

- i. I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed (2021)
- ii. Truth is lived, not taught (2019)
- iii. Too many of us are not living our dreams because we are living our fears (2018)
- iv. Beware the barrenness of a busy life! (2018)
- v. Literature is a lonely planet for idealists (2017)
- vi. We have to learn to be our own best friend, because we fall too easily into the trap of being our own worst enemies (2016)

It is pertinent to mention

here that as per some CSS experts and mentors, there is no concept of literary topics in CSS/PMS Essay examinations and all such topics that apparently look literary can be unfolded and expanded just like the ordinary issue-based topics. These gurus opine that this is merely the wording of the topics that makes them look literary in nature; otherwise, the demand of these topics is similar to the other topics that require scrupulous analysis of some political, social, administrative or economic issue.

CSS

ESSAY

COMMON MISTAKES IN TOPIC SELECTION

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Passing the Essay paper is always considered a stupendous task, may it be the CSS or PMS examination. A meticulous analysis of the results of these examinations also vindicates what is generally perceived about Essay paper as FPSC and Provincial Public Service Commissions use the very same paper, more often than not, for limiting the number of aspirants that are to be allowed to stage II of the process, i.e. the interview. What makes a good Essay, or at least one worth-qualifying, has never been an unanswered question as a number of books as well as FPSC's post-examination analyses comprehensively highlight the qualities that are required to be there in an essay. However, most aspirants rarely pay attention to learning Essay writing as a skill, and just try to pass the paper using different types of shortcuts which neither do nor should achieve the requisite goals.

"The mistakes of the world are warning message for you."
— Amit Kalantri

As CSS is always much more than merely an examination for the aspirants who have spent a number of sleepless nights in preparing for it, so it is always pragmatic to be circumspect and avoid every miniscule risk of failing the Essay paper just because of wrong selection of topic.

Note: Students having special predilection for literature, however, may attempt such topic provided they have practiced them well before the examination.

2. Aspirants should carefully consider the scope of the topic while expanding it in the outline: a topic may be global or Pakistan-specific in its scope and application. Where a Pakistan-specific topic allows the aspirants to remain confined to Pakistan only, a global topic demands a detailed discussion in a broader perspective. While writing essay on a topic having global scope, aspirants are

Global

Do not waste water even if you were at a running stream (CSS 2021)
 Meaning purposive education (CSS 2021)
 Human inventions move the societies backward (CSS 2021)
 Women universities as agents of change (CSS 2020)
 Do we really need literature in our lives? (CSS 2020)

Pakistan-specific

COVID-19: Awake-up call for Pakistani researchers (CSS 2021)
 Polarized politics: the issues and challenges of democracy in Pakistan (CSS 2020)
 Global power dynamics and Pakistan's foreign policy (CSS 2020)
 Pakistan's informal economy: the way forward (CSS 2020)
 Promoting tourism in Pakistan: opportunities and challenges (CSS 2020)

allowed to quote Pakistan-related observations to endorse their point of view, but they can never let their discussion revolve only around Pakistan. Here are some examples of Pakistan-specific and global topics for the better understanding of the aspirants:

3. Aspirants are strictly advised to avoid an impetuous approach while selecting the Essay topic. Every aspirant should spend 4-5 minutes in the process of topic selection and should read all the topics given in the question paper even if (s)he can write well on the very first topic of the paper. Many aspirants immediately stop reading the question paper whenever they find any topic that appears suitable to them. It is a mistake in the sense that they may miss some topic that could be handled better than the one they had selected.


Likewise, aspirants should be mindful of the fact that topics appearing simple and easy can be tricky and complex in reality and, hence, require careful reading. CSS

2018 topic "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Its Socio-economic Implications for the Region and the World" is the quintessence of the very same nature of CSS Essay paper: the topic that looked easy because of its being related to CPEC was immensely difficult in nature as it demanded aspirants to highlight the importance of CPEC for the region – something that aspirants rarely work on with reference to CPEC.

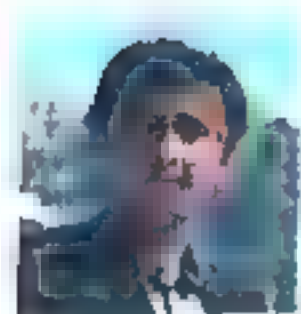
4. Aspirants should never try to go for the topic that they feel would be chosen by most of their fellows unless they can compete with others in terms of the quality of the material. In case aspirants are not sanguine of proving their distinction and uniqueness, they should select some other topic they can write well on. With reference to CSS/PMS examination, one should be very much clear that one's performance is evaluated in relation with other's performance; hence, it is always better to change the course if one does not have competitive advantage in playing on it.

5. It is immensely important to understand the requirement of the topic before drawing up the outline. Every topic can be expanded in a number of ways, yet aspirants are supposed to do it only the way the examiner would be expecting it to be. For instance, there could be hundreds of topics related to CPEC only, and every such topic would be addressed in a way different from the others. "CPEC: hopes and hurdles; CPEC as a game-changer for Pakistan; Expectations and over-expectations with reference to CPEC," these three CPEC-related topics will require your Essays to explore three entirely different dimensions. Aspirants who are unable to comprehend and meet the requirement of the topic can never pass CSS Essay paper as their effort would simply be marked as "irrelevant".

6. Likewise, in case of an argumentative Essay, aspirants should make every possible effort to support the stance given in the topic. Argumentative topics contain such a contention as can always be negated with the help of facts and figures. Yet ideally, it is not good. The examiner expects the candidates to build up a case in favour of the stance provided in the topic; negating the stance is simply tantamount to a lawyer's presenting the case against his own client before the court. Opposing the stance provided by the topic is justifiable only if it is not technically, morally, religiously or legally possible to support it. For instance, the stance given in the topic "Two Nation Theory is no more relevant in Pakistan" cannot be supported as it is against the basic ideology of our nationhood.

7. For improving the topic-selection skills, aspirants are advised to practice well before the examination. CSS/PMS past papers can be helpful for the purpose. 

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There are many definitions of leadership; however, most of them agree on the point that the great leaders have the ability to make visionary decisions and convince others to follow those. Leaders set the goals and make others achieve those.

Bill Gates, an American business magnet, software developer, author and cofounder of Microsoft, defines leadership as under:

"Leadership is all about empowering others."

John C. Maxwell is an American author and speaker who has written many books on leadership. His three famous books are:

1. The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership
2. Developing the Leader Within You
3. 21 Indispensable Qualities of A Leader

He defines leadership as under:

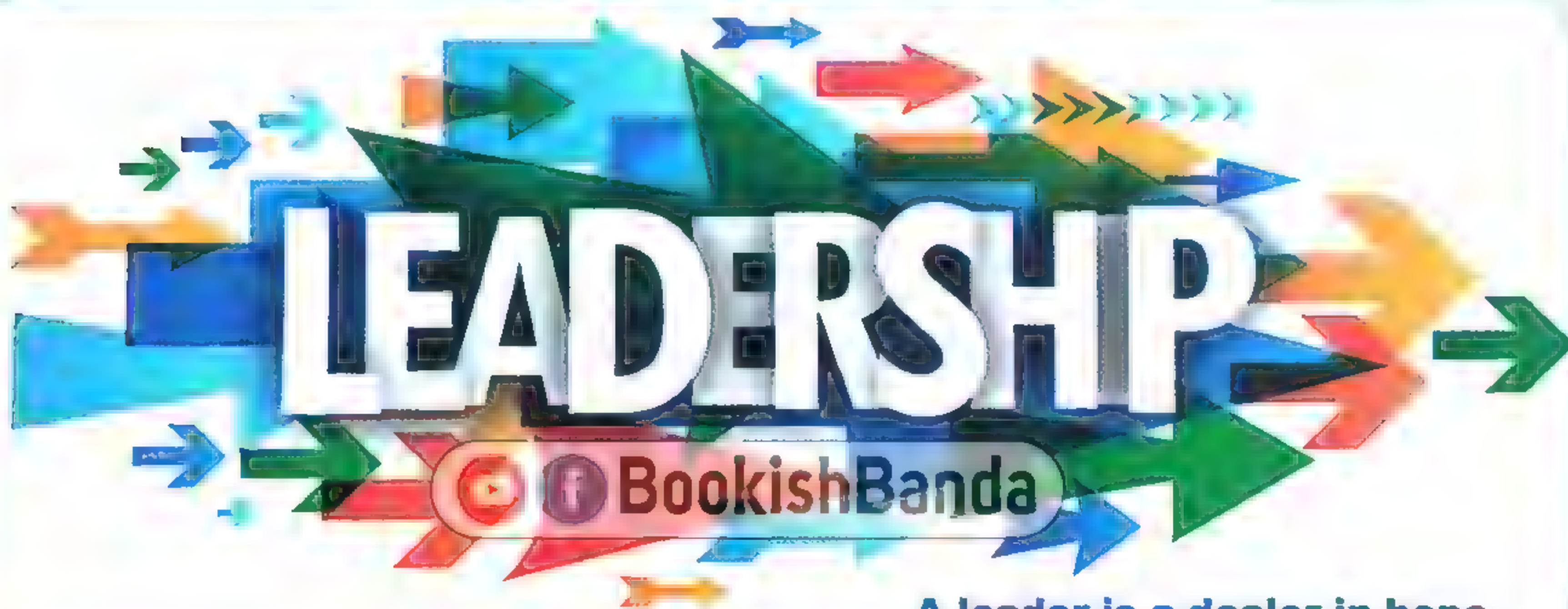
"Leadership is influence- nothing less, nothing more."

Muhammad Asim Jasra

- Leadership is dependent upon hierarchy and seniority. One should have a title to become a leader.
- In order to be a leader, one must have higher personal attributes.
- Leadership and management are synonymous.

Let me address these myths one by one.

- It is, indeed, a fact that leadership may be an inborn quality. Some persons are born leaders. Some people become leaders because of situations, and some learn to tap the leadership potential. Leadership is also a learned behaviour. It can be learned just like any other skill.
- Secondly, every person has leadership potential. However, it may be the case that many individuals fail to tap this God-gifted potential



A leader is a dealer in hope

Kevin Kruse, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of LEADx, says that "[l]eadership is a process of social influence which maximizes the efforts of others towards the achievement of a goal."

Former President of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower had said, "Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it."

The simplest definition of leadership is that it is "[t]he ability of a person to influence and guide others."

Myths about the leadership

There are certain myths about leadership which have been enumerated below:

- Leadership is only an inborn quality.
- Every person is not a leader.
- Leadership is a difficult task.

**You are never
too small to make
a difference.**

GRETA THUNBERG

because of a lack of consciousness and training. For example, even a shepherd is the leader of the herd. An intelligent student who guides his class-

fellows and teaches them some topic is a leader. A member of a family who takes important family decisions is a leader.

- It is wrong to say that leadership is a difficult thing to do. A person develops his leadership skills gradually. He passes from one level to the next, and improves, in the process, his competence and capacity to become a better leader. No one is supposed to be a great leader overnight nor is it possible.

- Leadership has nothing to do with seniority or being top in the hierarchy of an organization.

Leadership has its own prerequisites, and mere seniority is not enough to constitute leadership. You do not need a title to become a leader.

- When we think of leadership, we imagine big names of history as leaders. As a matter of fact, any ordinary person can be a leader in his sphere of influence.
- Leadership and management are two different skills. This difference has been explained at the end of this article.

Characteristics associated with leaders

- Leaders have a vision.
- They take decisions.
- They build teams.
- Leaders stand with members of their team in the times of crisis. They show empathy towards their followers.
- They face the crisis with perseverance and finally come out of it with flying colours because of their optimism and consistent efforts.
- They acknowledge the role played by the members of the team.
- They appreciate the efforts of members of their team. They are grateful to everyone who contributes towards achieving the goal.
- They welcome positive feedback and take measures to rectify the things in the light of the feedback.
- They translate their vision into achievable goals and mobilize their team to achieve these goals.
- They focus on the capacity building of team members and emphasize training aspect.
- They inspire others to put in maximum efforts.
- They know the art of creative thinking and give out-of-the-box solutions to the problems confronting their organizations.
- They are willing to take risks. They learn from their mistakes. They remain open to change.
- They establish their authority upon members of their team. This authority may be moral or legal. Owing to this authority, leaders make others follow and execute their decisions.
- Last but not last, leaders teach every team



member how to lead. They do not hesitate in producing more independent leaders.

Difference between leadership and management

A person may be a good leader but not a good manager, and vice versa. Some may have both the qualities. It is also a fact that every person has the leadership and management potential, but levels of both the skills may vary from person to person. Leadership and management are two different skills.

Leadership revolves around articulating a vision, making decisions, setting goals and inspiring the team to achieve those goals. There is a possibility that the leaders may not be skilled in the management aspect which is required to turn that vision into reality by taking care of 'how' part. On the other hand, management deals with the 'how' part. It is the monitoring of the steps required to be taken in order to execute that vision.

Some common leadership styles

Following are some of the common leadership styles:

1. Authoritative leadership

Establishing authority over the team, and demanding compliance of the decisions made.

2. Affiliative leadership

Creating emotional bond and harmony and inspiring others to follow the decisions by winning their hearts and minds

3. Democratic leadership

Building consensus among the team members through participation and then getting implemented the decisions mutually agreed


4. Charismatic leadership

Inspiring enthusiasm among the team members and motivating them to work towards the vision.

Significance for CSS/PMS aspirants

CSS/PMS aspirants who exhibit strong leadership skills are most likely to qualify the interview stage with good marks because leaders are the need of every organization. So, understanding the concept of leadership is highly significant for the aspirants of competitive examinations.

Conclusion

Leadership is a skill that should be learned by everyone. Organizations, institutions, societies and families need leaders. John C. Maxwell has rightly said: "A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way." 

The writer is a civil servant, belonging to Police Service of Pakistan (PSP).

Team Truss: Diverse and solidly on the Right

Liz Truss's new Cabinet is Britain's most diverse ever, with women serving as prime minister and deputy prime minister and Black and South Asian politicians filling key jobs. While they come from different backgrounds, they share the same small-state, free-market economic views and staunch Brexit support. A look at the key players

Chancellor of the Exchequer

KWASI KWARTENG

Britain's first Black Treasury chief is an old friend of Truss. They were co-authors of a book that notoriously claimed British workers are among the world's 'worst idlers'. Born to Ghanaian parents, Kwarteng was educated at the elite Eton College and Cambridge University and holds a PhD in economic history. He is regarded as one of the party's intellectual heavyweights. He will be crucial to the government's response to a cost-of-living crisis.

Fueled by soaring energy prices.



Foreign Secretary

JAMES CLEVERLY

The son of a white British father and Sierra Leonean mother, Cleverly is widely seen as pragmatic and affable; he has held foreign office posts as Europe and Middle East minister and was education secretary in the final weeks of Boris Johnson's government. He has also served in the foreign ministry as a junior minister. Now he has been promoted to Truss's old job, making him the first Black politician to serve as

Britain's top diplomat



Home Secretary

SUELLA BRAVERMAN

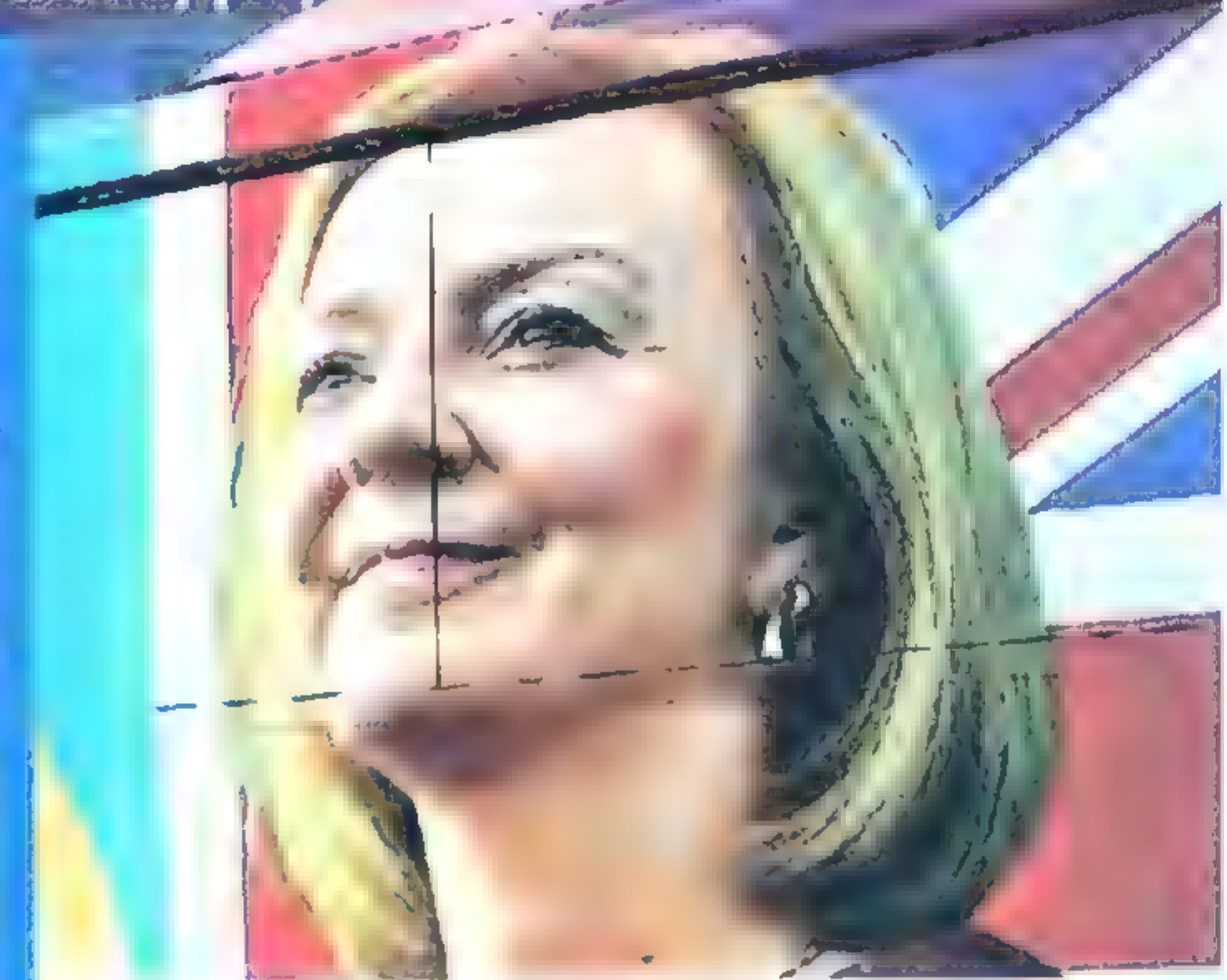
Britain's new home minister is a Cambridge-educated lawyer firmly on the party's right. The youngest ever home secretary at 42, she was born to Indian parents who moved to Britain from Kenya and Mauritius. She supports the predecessor Priti Patel's controversial plan to send some asylum seekers fleeing in the UK on a one-way ticket to Rwanda. She has previously packed divisive 'anti-bake' positions on key cultural issues.



Deputy Prime Minister

THERESE COFFEY

Lofrey, an old Truss ally, has been appointed health secretary and deputy prime minister. The first woman in the deputy job. She will face the vital task of leading up NHS. A practicing Catholic who has voted against liberalising access to abortion, Coffey says she will seek to address aspects of abortion law.



OTHER SENIOR MINISTERS

NADHIM ZAHAWI

Iraq-born leader has held Cabinet jobs under Boris and is minister for intergovernmental relations

KEMI BADENOCH

Considered a rising star of the party's right, has been appointed trade secretary

BEN WALLACE

He keeps his role as defence secy managing Britain's role in Ukraine

JACOB REES-MOGG

An arch Brexiteer and Right-wing face is minister for business, energy and industrial strategy

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ENGLAND'S NEW PRIME MINISTER

LIZ TRUSS

Social change means the alteration of mechanisms within a social structure, characterized by changes in cultural symbols, rules of behaviour, social organizations or value system. Simply, it is the study of shifts in attitudes and behaviours that characterize a society. Without a doubt, a society develops through evolutionary processes.

Therefore, a clear change in the socioeconomic structures of society is visible. Such societal changes are also a result of specific social movements, such as the civil rights movement, women's suffrage, and movements for women's empowerment. Cultural, religious, economic, scientific, or technical elements can also influence such social transformation. Women's empowerment has always been a contentious topic in developing nations like Pakistan because of the complicated cultural and socio-demographic environment. Overall major indicators of human development of women have been considered lower rather than men. Although Pakistan has taken some significant steps toward empowering women, their situation is still dire, particularly in rural regions.

Women's empowerment is a valuable instrument in developing nations like Pakistan for lifting millions of people out of the cycle of poverty, lowering mortality rates, decreasing dependency burdens, and promoting long-term sustained development of the world. Women's engagement is crucial for bringing about lasting change that benefits everyone, not just the women themselves. Women and girls make up an unreasonably large proportion of poor countries and are more likely to be hit by hunger, violence, disasters and climate change. Additionally, the majority of women in developing countries frequently lack legal rights and basic necessities of life when compared to men. Numerous recent studies conducted around the world show that women's empowerment is crucial for a nation to maintain sustainable economic progress. The empowerment of women is also a crucial component of gender equality. The relationship between economic growth and female empowerment is two-fold and is defined as increasing women's access to health, education, and employment opportunities as well as their rights and political engagement in general. In order to reduce gender inequality, economic development can make a big contribution. Education access, adequate job opportunities, and media information approaches are considered more appropriate and feasible measures for adequate women empowerment and healthcare access. Emergency, State-based policy measures must be implemented, such as providing women with access to education right outside their homes, increasing the number of jobs that give women priority, and


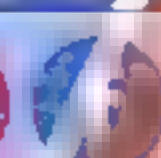
ensuring that they have proper media access to raise awareness of their legal rights and important social contributions.

Pakistan's inability to sustain gender equality and its failure to take into account the thoughts and viewpoints of roughly half the population prevent it from having the opportunity it needs to foster economic progress. If the participation rate of women in the workforce is equal to that of men, it is predicted that Pakistan's GDP will increase by nearly one-third, according to IMF research. Significantly increasing the participation of women in economic activities, will significantly aid the country's goal of inclusive development and sustainable economic growth. South Punjab is regarded as a backward zone in which women are in unfavourable conditions. In South Punjab, women's empowerment is substantially diminished due to patriarchal factors. So, in such circumstances, education is one of the best solutions which would enable women to contribute to the socio-economic development of the region in a better way. It is the need of time to provide girls of South Punjab with easily accessible educational opportunities, especially in the paradigm of higher education. In such prevailing conditions, the role of universities became important because such institutions can provide special facilities for girls' education. Introduction of special scholarships, availability of transport and allocation of special seats are the steps to motivate the female students for higher education.

Numerous NGOs and universities are working to make higher education of women easier, where KFUEIT takes the lead by motivating women to take admission in engineering, which is considered an "unorthodox" field for women in our country. The Vice-Chancellor Dr M. Suleman Tahir has offered cent percent scholarships and incentives to women to prompt them to pursue higher education by facilitating them in every possible way, hoping it would bring a change in society. It would bring a positive change and would empower the women in South Punjab. No doubt, the implementation of such policies is gradually changing the social and economic interface of the region. It will take some time to observe the candid impact of such policies. We hope to see similar initiatives that help break the stereotypes in South Punjab and bring a change in people's attitude towards women education. Even the smallest step in the right direction matters and should be acknowledged. ■

The writer is a student at Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology, Rahim Yar Khan

Women's Empowerment

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and their Role in Socio-economic Development in South Punjab





On 15-16th of September 2022, the 22nd annual meeting of Council of Heads of State (CHS) of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. This high-level meet-up was attended by all eight Heads of State/Government of SCO member states in person, four observer states and multiple Dialogue Partners.

The CHS is the highest forum of the SCO, because all strategically-important decisions of the organization regarding the future direction are taken here. Being the chair of SCO, the President of Uzbekistan, Shavkat

diversity, and pursuit of common development," was founded in Shanghai in 2001. Its importance and relevance can be judged from the facts that SCO covers, 40% of the world population, accounts for around 33% of land area and 25% of world's GDP, thus having a considerable impact on regional and global political and economic landscape. Moreover, the rising Asian powers, i.e., China, Russia, India and Pakistan, are the key players of SCO that intends to include more regional players, committed to the 'Shanghai Spirit' into its folds.

The leaders of the member and observer states and dialogue partners got the opportunity to have direct



Mirziyoyev, had invited President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey, President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan of Armenia and President Serdar Berdimu Khamedov of Turkmenistan to the summit as special guests. As heads of Observer States, the presidents of Iran, Mongolia and Belarus also attended the meeting. SCO, being the most important and proactive Intergovernmental Organization of Central, South and East Asian states, committed to pursuing the "Shanghai Spirit" for "promoting mutual respect, mutual benefit, mutual cooperation and regional peace, stability and connectivity, equality, consultation, respect for cultural

interaction with each other and discuss the issues pertinent to bilateral and regional cooperation. Peoples Republic of China, being the linchpin of SCO and a global rising power, gave special attention to the meeting as Chinese president Xi Jinping personally attended the meeting during his first overseas visit after the Covid-19 pandemic. While addressing the meeting, President Xi stated: "We stand for harmonious coexistence and mutual learning between different countries, nations and cultures, dialogue between civilizations and seeking common ground while shelving differences." He further added that his country is "ready to establish partnership and develop

win-win cooperation with other countries and international organizations that share our vision." During his speech, President Xi called for strengthening practical cooperation among the SCO member states and offered that China is ready to work with all the stakeholders for pursuing the "Global Development Initiative," which was proposed recently by China, and jointly promote the "Belt and Road Initiative".



Chinese president stressed that "member states should actively promote trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, ensure the stable and smooth functioning of industrial and supply chains, and encourage the orderly flow of resources and factors of production, so as to realize greater economic integration and development in the region." The importance of SCO meeting for China can be realized from the fact that Chinese president categorically mentioned his trade initiatives and called for redoubling of the efforts for promotion of complementarity between the Belt and Road Initiative, other national-level developmental strategies and regional cooperation initiatives for stimulation of dynamism that will ultimately lead to the growth in participating countries. Xi Jinping called for strengthening of SCO institutions and expansion of SCO family as the applicants for membership are increasing with

the passage of time. He added: "The SCO should seize the opportunity and step up its work to expand the ranks of cooperation and augment the effective force for international equity and justice."

President Xi also pledged that "China will provide developing countries in need with emergency humanitarian assistance of grain and other supplies worth 1.5 billion yuan." Moreover, he urged that the member states should fully implement the cooperation documents in the areas of trade and investment, infrastructure, supply chain, scientific and technological innovation, as



well as artificial intelligence.

At the end of the meeting, the Samarkand Declaration was unanimously adopted which shows the stance of SCO on important regional and global issues, that included Joint Statements on Climate Change, Food Security, Energy Security and maintaining Reliable International Supply Chains. The Summit also approved new initiatives of "Comprehensive Action Plan for 2023-2027 on the implementation of the provisions of the Treaty on Long-Term Good-Nighborliness, Friendship and Cooperation". The Declaration also reiterates the

"Concept for Cooperation of the SCO Member States in Developing Connectivity and Creating Efficient Economic and Transport Corridors and adopted the Regulations on the Honorary Title "Goodwill Ambassador of the SCO, and Roadmap for Gradual Increase in the Share of National Currencies in Mutual Settlements of the SCO Member States.

The Summit also agreed upon the further expansion of SCO and approved the request of Belarus as full membership status along with requests by Bahrain, UAE, Kuwait, Maldives and Myanmar for inclusion as new Dialogue Partners.

Pakistan was represented by a high-level delegation led by Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif, where apart from participation in the summit, the delegation met with many Heads of the States and Governments including Presidents of China, Russia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Iran, Azerbaijan, Belarus and Turkey, and discussed issues of bilateral nature. Prime Minister during his speech specifically focused on climate change and its impacts on Pakistan in the shape of floods and situations in Afghanistan. PM Sharif highlighted that "after 40 years of conflict, there was a real possibility to establish sustainable peace in that country and called for a new compact between Afghanistan and the international community and the need for constructive engagement with the Afghan interim authorities."

Shanghai Cooperation Organization, being stimulated and energized by the Shanghai Spirit, intends to improve the regional connectivity, build mutually beneficial relationships, reduce trust deficit and eliminate poverty through gigantic economic initiatives. Chinese vision of strengthening SCO aims at achieving the goals stated above. The Samarkand meet-up of SCO will prove a milestone in achieving these goals and further enhancing the cooperation among the member and observer states. ■

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Liberal internationalists employ the tenets of liberalism in understanding international relations and global order. Simply put, 'Internationalism' is a concept in international relations that is opposite to nationalism. As nationalism is a realist concept that advocates states' individual interests, liberal internationalism supports the development of a cooperative global community. Liberal internationalism is, basically, an 'international' version of liberalism. Realists dub the liberal claims of establishing a 'rule-based international order' as impractical and unachievable idealism or utopia. According to liberalists, the world, its order and the relations among states, can be regulated by cooperation and enhanced interdependence under the umbrella of international law. They also believe that economic interdependence and collective security have the grit to mitigate anarchy. Traditional theorists like Locke and Kant opine that free individuals cooperating with each other for pursuing mutual interests can successfully evade the perils of anarchy. The liberal internationalist theory started getting its trust before, and in the aftermath of, the First World War, and it is what inspired the creation of the League of Nations in January 1920 with an avowed intent to replace anarchy. Former US President Woodrow Wilson played a crucial role in the promotion of liberal internationalist ideas during very critical days of the War. That's why the theory is also referred to as 'Wilsonianism.'

It is pertinent here to learn the definition of liberal internationalism to have a grasp on the subject, before deconstructing it further. Liberal internationalism can be defined as an approach to international relations "aiming to spread liberal democracy throughout the world in order to bring an end to conflicts." Liberal international-

ism is a normative theory that means it is not an instrumental one like realism; instead, it differentiates between what is right and wrong, what is beneficial to humans and what is actually detrimental to them. Regarding causes and chances of war, liberal internationalists take an optimistic view of human nature. The use of violence is regarded as a last resort when all other means would have been fully exhausted.

In the post-Cold War era, liberalism as a paradigm and political and economic model emerged triumphant after long, intense and risky competition with USSR-led communism. The bipolar world order was completely transformed and a unipolar liberal order was established by the United States. The US, a liberal hegemon, became the standard-bearer and central player in future relations and politics among nations. The US and its Western partners took up this "sacred" responsibility, similar to their earlier forefathers, of exporting liberalism by democratizing and civilizing the undemocratic and uncivilized parts of the world. Despite contradictions, liberal internationalism is still relevant in the world because the emergence of new power centres in the world, especially China, has pushed the West to clamor "their" values higher so as to divert the world's attention from the emerging competitive models.

The main focus of the liberal international theoretical framework is to understand how to establish, and maintain, peace in the world. Only a peaceful international environment, as per liberals, will allow flourishing all other worthy tenets and activities such as human rights, justice, freedom, free trade and other economic activities leading to a just economic growth and economic prosperity. The order of the world in which states will give international law its due importance can establish long-



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Deconstructing Liberal Internationalism

term peace among the nations. As per Kant, the world dominated by liberal thoughts and values would be a "federation of free states governed by rule of law". In his essay on 'Perpetual Peace' (1795), Kant asserted that humans, through continuous effort, can establish perpetual peace and can defeat or mitigate the impact of international anarchy. According to Kant's claim, what is required for perpetual peace is not "moral angels but rational devils." If peoples and states know that their long-term interests are in reciprocity, would make informed cost-benefit analysis, take their choices rationally, will eventually achieve stability and peace. However, this can only happen if the circumstances are liberally conducive. So, the liberal international environment is seen as a precondition for the liberal values and reforms to take their roots. The ultimate goal is to establish 'democratic internationalism' for long-term peace. According to Kant, for mutually interdependent democratic nations, ultimately the cost of going to war will become unaffordable. Thus, the use of violence will be left with no political and economic incentives. The war will be no more among the states' rational policy options. Furthermore, liberals believe that a real compatibility between domestic and international liberalism is inevitable. There are only bleak chances that a state undemocratic domestically could be democratic or liberal internationally. This might be one of the reasons that the Western powers want to establish democracy and impose their so-called democratic values in the whole world because they deem it convenient to develop cordial relations with other democracies.

Fact of the matter is, to liberals, rationality is paramount. The West's real concern is irrationality. They would fear nothing else as they fear irrationality because there is no deterrence to irrational behaviour. Westerners want to make the world rational of their liking for their own sake. Americans and the allies plainly fail to deter or overcome the Taliban because they were not "rational" thinkers. The so-called 'Operation Enduring Freedom' for nation-building in Afghanistan humiliatingly failed and the failure proved to be a death knell for liberal internationalism. Now the Americans are trying to trap the Taliban by other means; neoliberalism is at work. The success they could not achieve in two decades of use of force is now being pursued through economic and financial gimmicks.

The neoliberal agenda is tactfully employed in the majority of the world as an exploitative ideology. It's an open secret that the West is selectively democratic and rarely liberal whenever there is a clash of interests with these liberal promises.

In the process of exporting democracy to the world, American actions included many misadventures which were starkly against the so-called liberal values. History is evident that there is a close connection between internationalism and imperialism. Liberal internationalists of early time under the guise of democratizing and civilizing the "savage" regions of the world established their colonies and empires, subjugated the natives and exploited their resources ruthlessly. Now in the modern days, more or less similar practices are going on under the masquerade of 'humanitarian interventions'.

Resultantly, the very peace and stability of the world is at risk. There are countless contradictions in the US policies to its gigantic liberal claims. For example, instead of discouraging the undemocratic forces by not developing diplomatic relations with them, the US and its

Western allies have been enjoying cordiality with all the authoritarian regimes in the Arab world, primarily, due to the convergence of interests with them. Why do they happen to forget Kant's philosophy in such cases? Why Americans and Europeans deviate on such

occasions from their principled stance and play like hardcore realists? Similar contradictions are

also found on the part of the great Western

powers in their compliance with

international law and other international obligations such as environmental issues, trade liberalization and visa policies.

Moreover, the way European nations are vehemently condemning Russia for attacking Ukraine, the majority of them have been either silent spectators or partners with the US in many of its unjust military missions. Why this criminal duality? Does this selectivity really make any sense? These are some of the main reasons why Americans as proponents of liberal internationalism are rapidly losing the world's trust. After counting many such contradictions and impracticalities in his book, renowned American political scientist John Mearsheimer labels liberalism as a great delusion. ■

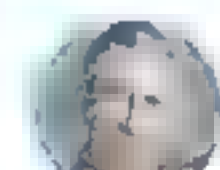
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Became heir apparent when her uncle Edward VIII abdicated and her **father George VI became king**



Married Philip Mountbatten, a Greek Prince and navy lieutenant



Prince Charles



Princess Anne



Prince Andrew



Prince Edward

Children



Became queen after the death of her father



JUNE 2, 1953

Formally crowned the monarch of the United Kingdom in the first televised coronation service



BookishBanda

Queen Elizabeth and Prince Phillip's first visit to India. They visited together again in 1983 and 1997

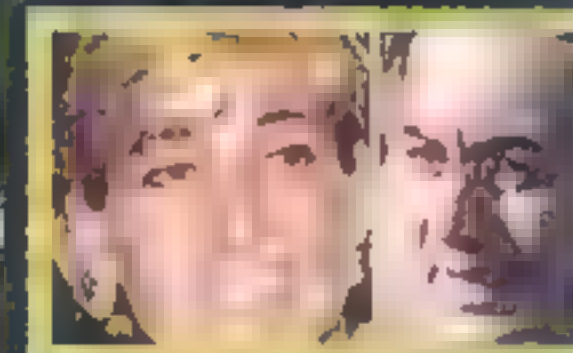


A mining tragedy killed 116 children and 28 adults in Aberfan, South Wales. **The Queen criticised for her delayed response**



1997

Princess Diana and her companion Dodi al-Fayed killed in a car crash



2002

The queen completes 50th year of service

2014

Queen's last foreign state visit (to Germany)



Prince Philip's death



Completes 70 years of service



Types of Sets



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Asad Aziz

1. _____, universal, proper, singleton and power set are a few of the many types of sets.

- (a) Finite (b) Infinite
(c) Subset (d) All of the above

2. Whenever n is a non-negative integer, a set is said to be finite if it contains only _____ distinct elements.

- (a) n (b) $n+1$
(c) $n-1$ (d) n^2

3. An _____ set is a finite set.

- (a) Innumerable (b) Enumerable
(c) Both (a) and (b) (d) None of these

4. A/an _____ set is one that has no end.

- (a) Non-finite (b) Finite
(c) Infinite (d) None of these

5. The _____ is n .

- (a) Cardinality of sets
(b) Cardinal number of sets
(c) Both (a) and (b)
(d) None of these

6. _____ is another name for a countably infinite set.

- (a) Enumerable (b) Denumerable
(c) Non-numerable (d) Innumerable

7. In mathematics, countable sets are defined as _____.

- (a) Finite (b) Denumerable
(c) Both (a) and (b) (d) None of these

8. A non-negative even integer set is _____.

- (a) Countable Infinite
(b) Uncountable Finite
(c) Countable Finite
(d) Uncountable Infinite

9. Infinite sets that can't be counted are called _____.

- (a) Uncountable infinite sets
(b) Non-denumerable sets
(c) Uncountable sets
(d) All of the above

12. If every element of A is also an element of B , then _____.

- (a) A is called Superset of B
(b) B is called Superset of A
(c) A and B are Superset
(d) B is called Subset of A

10. A is called a subset of B , if _____ element of A is also an element of B .

- (a) Few (b) None
(c) Little (d) Every

11. If every element of A is also an element of B , it is denoted by:

- (a) $A \subseteq B$ (b) $A \cup B$
(c) $A - B$ (d) $A + B$

12. If every element of A is also an element of B , then:

- (a) A is called Superset of B
(b) B is called Superset of A
(c) A and B are Superset
(d) B is called Subset of A

13. Which of the following is/are a

property (properties) of a subset?

- (a) Sets are subsets of one another.
(b) Every set contains a Null Set, i.e. \emptyset .
(c) The subset of A will be C if it is a subset of B and B is a subset of C .
(d) All of the above

14. Which of the following is a property of a subset?

- (a) If there are n elements in a finite set, there are 2^n subsets
(b) If there are n elements in a finite set, there are n^2 subsets
(c) If there are n elements in an infinite set, there are 2^n subsets
(d) If there are n elements in an infinite set, there are n^2 subsets

15. If $A \subset B$ and $B \subset C \Rightarrow$ _____

- (a) $C \subset A$ (b) $A \subset C$
(c) $A \cup C$ (d) $A + C$

16. Whenever A is a subset of B , and $A \neq B$, then A is called a _____ subset of B .

- (a) Proper (b) Improper
(c) Finite (d) Infinite

17. B _____ of A if A is a proper subset of B .

- (a) Is not a subset (b) Is a subset
(c) Is not a superset (d) None of these

18. Every set has a null _____ as a proper subset.

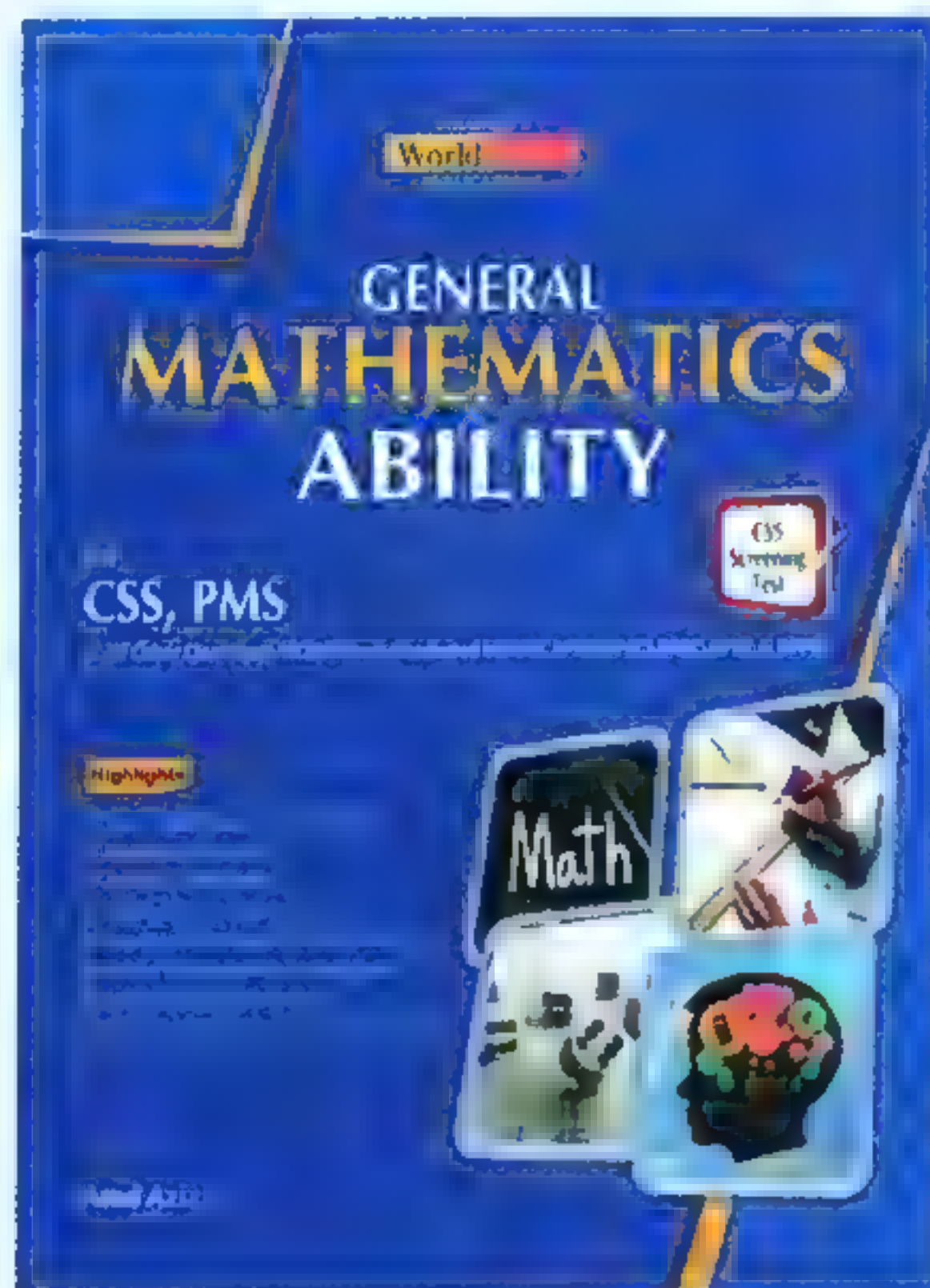
- (a) = (b) \emptyset
(c) * (d) U

19. Sets are _____ subsets of themselves.

- (a) Proper (b) Improper
(c) Finite (d) Infinite

20. _____ sets, do not contain any elements.

- (a) Null (b) Void
(c) Empty (d) All of the above





Out of Sight



What the eye sees not, the heart craves not!

Muhammad Atif Sheikh

"When the missionaries came to Africa they had the Bible and we had the land. They said 'Let us pray.' We closed our eyes. When we opened them we had the Bible and they had the land."

This was said by Nobel Laureate Desmond Tutu, the first black Anglican Archbishop of the South African cities of Johannesburg and then Cape Town. By these words, he is metaphorically pointing to the importance of the eye in seeing, then believing and understanding the reality of things. It means that the 'eye' is not related to only the act of seeing; rather its use is quite broad in terms of its meaning and scope. In this write-up, we are not going to discuss the meanings of 'eye' in its metaphorical use, but we will talk about its actual use for which it was created by the Almighty, i.e. sight, to highlight the importance of which the World Sight Day is observed across the globe on the second Thursday of October every year. This year, it is being celebrated on October 13 with 'Love Your Eyes' as its theme.

Although all of our five senses are important, sight is the one that has the most prominence among those because it allows us to connect with our surroundings. Around 80 percent of what we learn reaches to our brain through our eyes. They play a significant role in every aspect and stage of our life. We usually take sight for granted but without it, we face severe difficulties in walking, reading, learning, playing, working and performing other activities of life. It is due to your sight that you are reading this article by yourself. It is most important of all our five senses also because when it comes to living our life with some sort of

disability, it is our eyes and vision that prove to be our best assets. For example, for a person with impaired hearing or having some problems while speaking, it is his sight that he relies on to do the daily tasks. Because even if he is communicating through sign language, he needs eyes to understand what the other person is gesturing. Such people develop exceptional and incredibly accurate lip-reading skills and what other sense can help him in doing so more than his sight!

Eyes also play a decisive role in helping you evade a possible danger, especially if your one or more other senses are impaired. If, God forbid, you are unable to hear a car horn, an alarm sound or people screaming, it's your eyes that help you know that you are in danger. Your eyes also help you decide whether the food you are about to eat tastes good or not. Taste is generally considered a fairly weak sense. This is why your body also relies on your sight to decide whether a food or drink will be good or not. And this comes from the presentation of food or the recognition of its colour. A human eye can identify around seven million colours and this incredible ability is quite useful in deciding whether something is pleasant because humans naturally connect the taste of a thing with its colour. For example, red colour is considered the sweetest of all, although your sense of sight, sometimes, overpowers your ability to perceive actual taste.

Sight is the most important sense in the human body sans which a person always lives a life of misery and uncertainty. For example, he may not know what the people around him look like, how is the environment out,

and, perhaps most importantly, what he himself looks like. Good vision and eye health enhance your abilities to learn, earn a living, maintain your well-being and participate in social activities.

It is said that a picture is more elaborative than mere words, as the famous saying goes: "A picture is worth a thousand words." A message in a picture cannot be deciphered unless you have the ability to see because it is this vision that allows the processing of large amounts of information in a rather short span of time.

Eyes play an important role in every stage of our life. They have the ability to completely change our actions and lifestyle. Just, for a moment, compare in your imagination a blind person with a sighted person. The first thing that would come to your mind will be that a blind person is completely dependent on others and, unlike that, a person who can see is self-dependent.

Likewise, the lifestyle of a blind person is much different from that of a sighted person. You must have heard an ages-old proverb which says that "eyes are windows to the soul," will you believe that your eyes are also the window to your health? In fact, doctors are now able to diagnose many other ailments in your body by just examining your eyes. Since your eyes delineate the condition of your nerve tissues and blood vessels, examining them can help your physician to detect ills like diabetes, high blood pressure, infections and even changes in the patterns of your immune system.

In medical terminology, visual impairment occurs when the condition of eyes affects the visual system and disturbs one or more of its functions. Such impairment can have serious consequences for an individual, at any age. Risk factors and causes of the eye problems include ageing, genetic issues, lifestyle and behaviours, infections and several other health conditions.

However, many of these risks can be reduced through timely access to quality eye care and rehabilitation.

That means 90 percent of all vision

loss is preventable – that is, it's treatable.

Almost everyone needs access to eye care services during their lifetime, yet millions of people around the world still suffer from vision impairment or they are living with blindness. This number could have been curtailed to a minimum but, unfortunately, that has not happened because these people didn't have access to even basic eye-care services. The situation is so grim that according to the Vision Atlas 2020 of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB), "There are 1.1 billion – 1106 million – people globally with vision loss (including blindness)." On the other hand, the World Report on Vision 2019 of the United Nations

World Health Organization (WHO)

says that "2.2 billion people are visually impaired or blind."

Visual impairment costs the global economy around \$411 billion a year in productivity losses annually. A vast majority of the blind people worldwide live

Eye Care Tips

There are things you can do to help keep your eyes healthy and make sure you are seeing your best:

Eat a healthy, balanced diet. Your diet should include plenty of fruits and vegetables, especially deep yellow and green leafy vegetables. Eating fish high in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon, tuna, and halibut can also help your eyes.

Maintain a healthy weight. Being overweight or having obesity increases your risk of developing diabetes. Having diabetes puts you at higher risk of getting diabetic retinopathy or glaucoma.

Get regular exercise. Exercise may help to prevent or control diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol. These diseases can lead to some eye or vision problems. So if you exercise regularly, you can lower your risk of getting these eye and vision problems.

Wear sunglasses. Sun exposure can damage your eyes and raise your risk of cataracts and age-related macular degeneration. Protect your eyes by using sunglasses that block out 99 to 100% of both UV-A and UV-B radiation.

Wear protective eye wear. To prevent eye injuries, you need eye protection when playing certain sports, working in jobs such as factory work and construction, and doing repairs or projects in your home.

Avoid smoking. Smoking increases the risk of developing age-related eye diseases such as macular degeneration and cataracts and can damage the optic nerve.

Know your family medical history. Some eye diseases are inherited, so it is important to find out whether anyone in your family has had them. This can help you determine if you are at higher risk of developing an eye disease.

Know your other risk factors. As you get older, you are at higher risk of developing age-related eye diseases and conditions. It is important to know your risk factors because you may be able to lower your risk by changing some behaviors.

If you wear contacts, take steps to prevent eye infections. Wash your hands well before you put in or take out your contact lenses. Also follow the instructions on how to properly clean them, and replace them when needed.

Give your eyes a rest. If you spend a lot of time using a computer, you can forget to blink your eyes and your eyes can get tired. To reduce eyestrain, try the 20-20-20 rule: Every 20 minutes, look away about 20 feet in front of you for 20 seconds.

Pakistan has the seventh largest number of visually-impaired people and 12.7% of the country's population is experiencing vision problems. According to IAPB's Vision Atlas 2020, around 26.3 million people in Pakistan are living with poor vision. According to statistical analysis, 2.4% of the world and 7.9% of South Asia's people with vision problems are living in Pakistan. Pakistan's Ministry of National Health Services, in collaboration with the WHO, conducted two national blindness surveys in 1989-90 and 2003-04. In the light of the results obtained thereupon, a national committee for the prevention of blindness was formed, which later, in 2008, became the National Health

A growing population and problems related to ageing, as well as changes in lifestyles and urbanization may increase the number of people with eye problems, vision impairment and blindness to new heights in the coming decades. If we fail to ensure that more and more people have easy access to eye care services, it may prove to be a formidable challenge, the societies will be faced with. ■

780 million



Change is a sine qua non in the evolution of human society; hence, inevitable and constant. Most recent change is underscored by the technological upshots. It has become appallingly obvious that our technology has exceeded our humanity. Presently, technology is transforming everything around us, from enterprises to societies and everything in between. In the past decade, digital transformation has gained significance as all avenues tried to digitalize themselves and endeavoured to excel in their respective fields. From the Cloud and artificial intelligence to blockchain and big data and the Internet of Things, digital technologies are defining and redefining how we live, think and work. They are expanding the purview of the potential in terms of new inventions, services and business models, as well as the processes that facilitate these new offers.

Qasim Ali Bhatti



A peek into the history reveals that digital technologies had advanced more rapidly than any innovation in our history - reaching around 50 percent of the developing world's population in only two decades, and transforming societies. Technology can be a great equalizer as it is promoting multiple things, e.g. trade and connectivity. Technology is impacting multiple sectors of life. In the health sector, for instance, multiple technologies are helping to save lives, diagnose diseases and extend life.

expectancy. In education, online learning environments and distance learning have opened up programmes to students who would otherwise be excluded. Public services are also becoming more accessible and accountable through blockchain-powered systems, and less bureaucratically burdensome. Big data can also support more responsive and accurate policies and programs. However, those yet to be connected remain cut off from the benefits of this new era and remain further behind. The use of algorithms can replicate and even amplify human and systemic bias where they function on the basis of data which is not adequately diverse. Lack of diversity in the technology sector can mean that this challenge is not adequately addressed. It has become imperative for businesses to adapt and act fast — pivoting processes and operations to survive and build resilience for a sustainable future ahead. Digital transformation needs to be at the top of the priority list as a long-term investment, keeping in view the current dynamics. At present,

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THE
**Future
is
Digital**

enterprises must re-imagine their future and get on board intelligent digital re-engineering. Humans and machines must harmonize with each other to propagate more innovative, agile and adaptable economies and enterprises.

Post-pandemic digitalism is rising

As a post-pandemic new normal, Covid-induced digitalized events are expected to continue. However, in-person communication and physical activities may resume only to the extent where the businesses can accrue most benefits such as sharing tacit knowledge or to capture social value. A recent report by UNCTAD on Covid-19 and e-commerce finds that, while global trade in goods and services declined amidst the pandemic, the share of the e-commerce industry in global retail increased up to 17 percent in 2020. This trend is most likely to continue throughout the recovery times from the disease. The report also suggests that digitalization of buyers and sellers helped reduce the negative impacts of lockdown on the economy. While the e-commerce sector and digital trade has been dominated by developed countries, Covid-19 has also steered up the process in developing countries since last year, particularly in Asia. For instance, China's online retail share increased from 19 percent to almost 25 percent. Similarly, Thailand witnessed an almost 60 percent increase in downloading of online shopping apps in just one week during March 2020.

The future of consumer technology

As said, the future lies in technology and will keep on doing rounds. The future of the human-technology interface is reliant on the fact that every business — whether it is hospitality, education, logistics, food & beverage, personal care, and myriad others — is a technology business. Digital touch points are being inserted at every step of the customer journey from awareness to realization to advocacy. Interactive kiosks, radio-frequency identification tags, virtual reality simulations, and computer vision are examples of how immersive human-technology interactions are in business-to-customer (B2C) models. However, the distant digital brand experience will not continue to be the only norm. In the next 18 to 24 months, we will witness in-person and digital experiences to be more intertwined than ever before. Customer journeys will constitute offline transactions with integrated digital elements to elevate brand experience and hyper-personalization. A more digital world, therefore, must be coupled with a more connected and networked society.

Moving towards a faster future

Man is futuristic. Many parts of his futuristic vision are already a reality. With just a single click, we can buy anything we want from e-commerce platforms that offer a huge range of products from around the world. New distribution channels such as direct-to-consumer bring products from the manufacturer directly to our homes. Products are made in smart factories that use sensors and micro-cameras to optimize production and energy efficiency in real time. Advanced technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning are solving problems and helping to make our lives more convenient. Blockchain technology is making our world faster and more transparent by simplifying interactions between digital processes. And 3D printing is being used to personalize everything from sneakers to car interiors.

Transforming human and machine interaction

If everything is connected to the internet, cyber security solutions will have to keep pace with the digital transformation so companies and individuals can be certain that their personal information stays safe. And it will be equally important to develop big data

solutions with the power to make sense of the mountain of data generated by a fully connected world — by using advanced algorithms to make predictions and identify potential problems ahead of time. The interfaces between people and machines will shape our digitized future. Data, digital tools and technologies will not be able to accomplish the

transformation alone. On the contrary, it is only through interaction and the human perspective and expertise — the ability to process emotions, understand context and find creative solutions — that the full potential of modern technologies will be realized. The success of digital transformation of companies is primarily shaped by the company and leadership culture. Is there room to try new things, to experiment, and to fail? And how is collaboration and networking promoted within and outside the company? The crucial interfaces of digital transformation exist not only between people and machines, but also between companies and the experts within a company and across companies.

Current digital transformation

Transformation is the spice of the life and change is the spirit of the world, and technology is doing both. The pandemic proved to be devastating for several organizations as their business collapsed. But, on the other hand, the crisis also accelerated the adoption of technology within various industries across the globe. The major integration of technology into the traditional business



structures has led to the rise of certain trends that have the potential of dictating the future of digital transformation.

5G becomes a reality

Various generations have produced myriads of benefits. 5G is in the lead role now. In the post-pandemic world, work in the digital platform has become the new normal, and organizations are increasingly attempting to operate their business from remote environments. While the concept of 5G had been in discussion in the past year itself, it is expected to become a technological prominence. As this network is expected to provide unprecedented speed and connectivity to the users, it is capable of providing a reliable connection. The mainstreaming of 5G connectivity can enhance the user experience and improve the process of digital collaboration which subsequently will accelerate the digital transformation. 5G will connect almost everything and everyone on the planet at a rapid speed. It will make it possible for traffic lights in smart cities to communicate with the cars on the road. These connected vehicles, powered by electricity instead of fossil fuels, will use self-driving technology to guide us safely to our smart homes.

Development of blockchain

Blockchain is a new normal in the digital world. The rapid technological advancement in the wake of Covid-19 has brought the concept of blockchain to the limelight. While the concept has emerged from the understanding of cryptocurrency, it is increasingly being adopted and implemented in several other industries especially into the structure of financial institutions. The capabilities of the Blockchain are continually being contemplated by organizations all over the world. It is expected that Blockchain might play a crucial role in cybersecurity and might be increasingly used in industries in the future.

Cybersecurity supersedes the priority list

Cybersecurity has gained prominence in the world. Security of any sorts breeds confidence of all sorts. The pandemic led to a major shift of business from the traditional forms of business into the digital platform. This resulted in the increased use of vulnerable data among organizations. In addition to this, consistent cyber attacks on organizations across the globe have brought the concept of cybersecurity into the limelight. It is becoming a very crucial issue for companies across the globe. The increasing investment in cybersecurity is a future trend within digital transformation.

Digital banking transpires

The finance and banking sector's digital transformation was the most affected among the industries during the

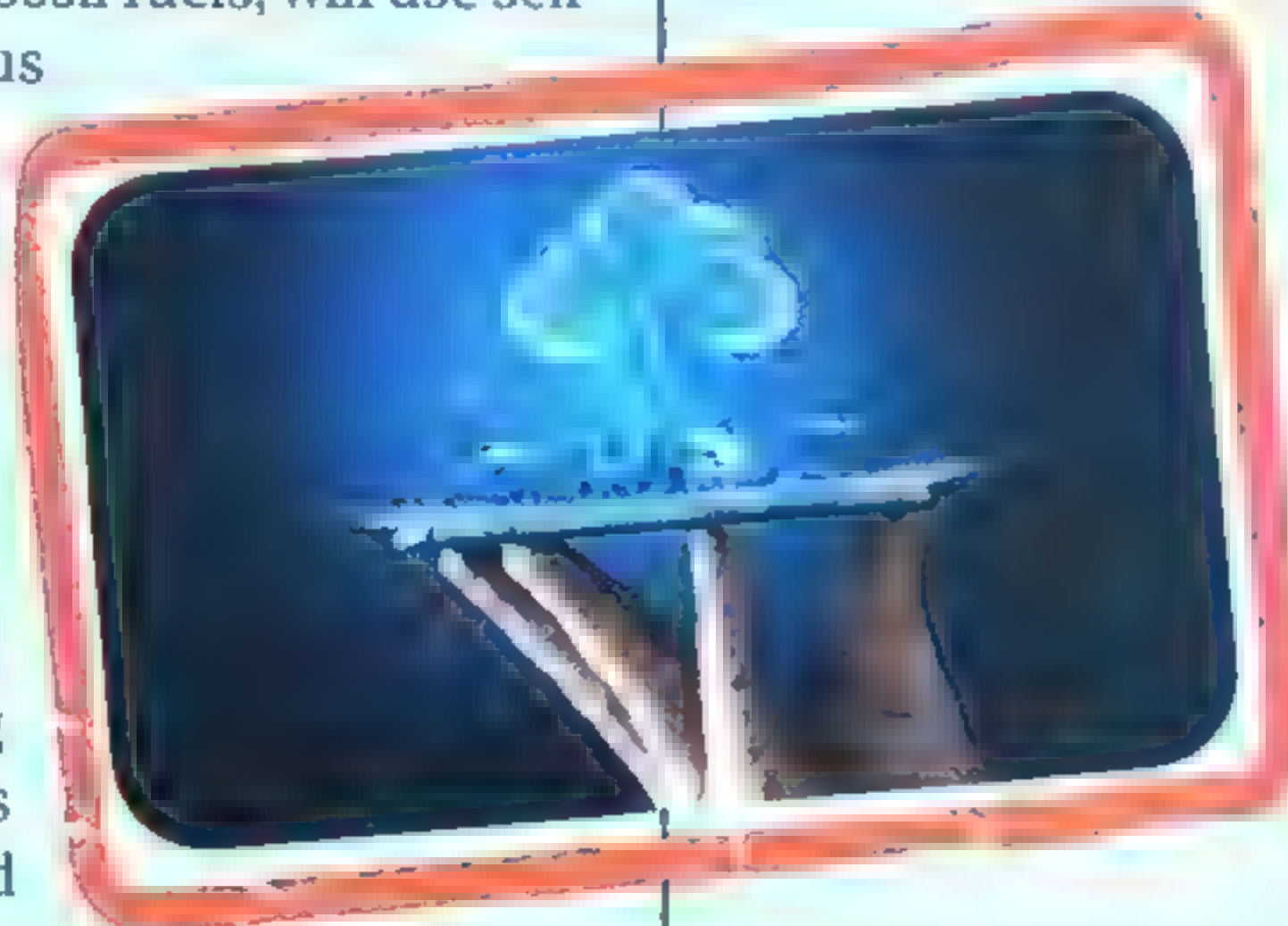
pandemic. The strict government guidelines forced the banking sector to provide most of its important services through the digital platform. The increasing adoption of digital transformation can be expected within this sector to improve the digital banking processes and enhance customer experiences.

Growth of the multi-cloud system

In the post-pandemic world, organizations are increasingly moving to the cloud platform. This will inadvertently lead to the growth of the multi-cloud system. As the system has the potential to remove the common issues faced by providers and the vendor lock-ins, multi-cloud systems can be expected to flourish increasingly shortly and shape the process of digital transformation.

Conclusion

To conclude, I would put: 'Modern problems have modern solutions' turns out to be true as swift digitalization brought with it a number of challenges and limitations. While the digital infrastructure is at its infancy stage, it has already created a digital divide in society. In the



Inclusive Internet Index 2020, Pakistan ranked at 76th out of 100 countries with only 35 percent of population having access to the internet. This has magnified the gap between the privileged and the unprivileged, skilled and unskilled, urban and rural. The tech-savvy will be ahead of those with limited or no access to digital tools. The world of work is undergoing radical change. Business has become a real-time experience, we deal with a

relentless stream of messages and communications, and we operate in a network of teams. Traditional top-down hierarchy is rapidly going away as young professionals demand more opportunities, leadership, and responsibility. Cutting-edge tools and solutions can provide answers to the biggest challenge of our time – the urgent need to cut resource consumption and protect our planet for future generations. In factories, for example, data about how much water or energy is being used can be gathered and analyzed in real time to identify opportunities to cut waste and minimize emissions. Data from production sites is collected and made available in a global digital backbone system, which can then be used as a basis for future decisions. This high-tech and sustainable vision of the future would have been unimaginable just a few years ago. But it is now becoming reality. Hence, the future is digital only.

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THE IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL



Back in 1950s, when Iran was a staunch supporter of the United States under the rule of Reza Shah Pahlavi, the US, through the 'Atom for Peace Program', helped Iran, like other developing countries, to use nuclear program for energy and other civilian, peaceful purposes. This program helped the US secure its allies during the Cold War. The US thought that if it provides peaceful civilian nuclear technology to its allies, they would not need to build it militarily. Through this program, Iran received nuclear technology, fuel,

laboratory equipment, and power plants. In 1967, Iran received its first 5MW (megawatts) research reactor from the US. Along with this, in February 1979, the Iranian parliament ratified the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), thus agreeing to its main tenet of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and use of nuclear energy for only peaceful purposes. After the Iranian Revolution in 1979, whereby a pro-American government was replaced with an anti-American one, the US ceased its support for



From "Atom for Peace" to JCPOA

Once was a time when the United States helped Iran start its nuclear program, however, Uncle Sam now wants to curtail the Iranian nuclear program, the P5+1 — the UN Security Council's five permanent members (the P5) — namely China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States; plus Germany — linked with Tehran, in 2015, a landmark agreement called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), commonly known as the Iran Nuclear Deal. However, the pact has been in jeopardy since the capricious Donald Trump, the then-US president, unilaterally withdrew, in 2018, the US from it and imposed a slew of new sanctions on the Islamic republic.

Iranian nuclear program, although the latter covertly continued its work on it. It, somehow, managed to import nuclear facilities, such as centrifuges - an instrument needed for the enrichment of uranium. Sensing the fragility of the situation, Iran kept secret everything regarding its nuclear program. However, it was later on known that Iran, through Project Amad, had established its plan, in late 1990s/early 2000s, of acquiring weapons-grade uranium, testing of nuclear weapons components and the construction of a nuclear weapon. However, according to media reports, it was believed that the project had perhaps ended suddenly in 2003. But, the

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was suspicious of its abandonment, as were Israel and the West. Later on, many covert nuclear facilities, which were believed to be working toward the building of a nuclear bomb, were reported by the IAEA. With this, Israel claimed that its spies had found documents regarding Project Amad showing that it was not abandoned and that Iran was close to having a nuclear weapon. Meanwhile, Iran denied the IAEA inspection team access to its nuclear facilities. All these developments made the West more suspicious of the intentions of Iran. The international community was now convinced that Iran was intending to become a nuclear power, because the number of centrifuges reported was more than what was needed for civilian purposes. The Islamic Republic, however, had been denying such allegation saying that its nuclear program is entirely for peaceful purposes.

Now, to prevent Iran from building a nuclear weapon, the international community, especially the US and other Security Council members, imposed sanctions on Iran, targeting particularly its oil imports and banking sector. The West strained every nerve to sabotage, both covertly and overtly, the Iranian nuclear program. For example, in 2010, as many as 15 Iranian nuclear facilities were cyber-attacked. Despite the warnings and sanctions from the West, Iran was adamant to not quit its nuclear program, insisting that it was only for civilian energy and research purposes. However, the crippling economic sanctions had badly affected its already dwindling economy.

Thus, being in cognizance of the fact that diplomacy is the best solution to any crisis, both the West and Iran, after the hectic efforts of many years, eventually came to the negotiation table. Consequently, the negotiation came to fruition in July 2015, with the signing of the JCPOA.

The aim of this agreement was the nuclear non-proliferation and use of nuclear technology only for peaceful purposes. To put it otherwise, it aimed to prevent

the spread of nuclear weapons falling in the wrong hands. After all, when it comes to the nuclear weapons, the P5 countries are the bosses. They reckon that any other country may prove irresponsible in handling

the nuclear technology. Thus, to keep check on countries that are ambitious of acquiring nuclear program, these countries have made various treaties and organizations, e.g. Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

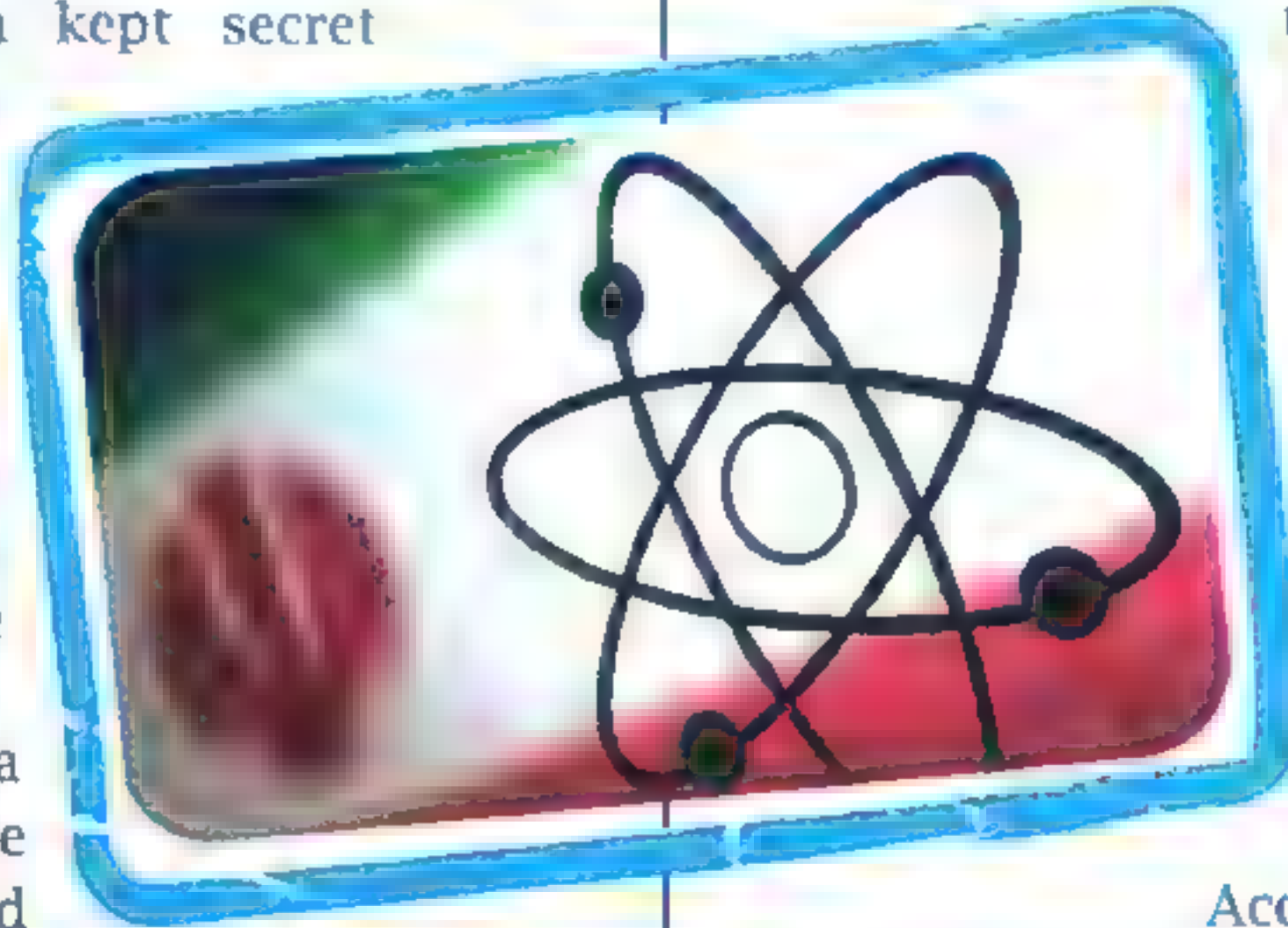
Thus, to prevent Iran from going nuclear, the JCPOA was signed.

According to the pact, Iran agreed to limit its nuclear program and allow the IAEA inspectors to monitor and inspect its nuclear facilities in exchange for lifting the biting economic sanctions. It assured the international community that it will not produce either the highly-enriched uranium or plutonium that could be used in building a nuclear weapon. Moreover, its nuclear facilities, as Iran guaranteed, would pursue only civilian work, including medical and industrial research. To reciprocate, the US, UN and EU agreed to lift sanctions and end weapons embargo on Iran. Ban on the sale of Iranian oil was ended and it was allowed to access its US\$100 billion assets overseas which had been frozen due to sanctions. With this, Iran was allowed to use the global financial system for trade.

While heading toward the agreement, the US intelligence reports had estimated that, in the absence of an agreement, Iran may build nuclear bomb within a year. Now, in concordance with the accord, the IAEA, the global nuclear watchdog, was tasked to closely monitor the situation and that no fissile material is covertly transported to a secret location to build an atomic bomb.

The proponents of the agreement maintained that it would prevent Iran from having nuclear weapons and would diminish the prospects of conflict between Iran and its regional rivals, such as Israel and Saudi Arabia. They believed that if there were no accord, a huge arms race in the Middle East would be pursued with each country going nuclear to counter and deter its opponent. Saudi Arabia, for instance, had already signalled that it would obtain nuclear weapons shall Iran get one. Moreover, Israel, the undeclared nuclear state, and the arch-foe of Iran, does not want any other nuclear state in the region. It had taken preemptive military actions against suspected nuclear facilities in Iraq and Syria. It is doing the same in case of Iran, albeit with variable severity.

After a year of IAEA's evaluation, it was confirmed that Iran was complying with the pact. However, in 2018, President Trump, being penchant toward Israel,



announced that he wanted to renegotiate the agreement on new conditions in first place. But, later, he unilaterally withdrew from the agreement calling it too lenient on Iran. He said the agreement had failed to address Iran's ballistic missile program – a thing which was not included in the accord – and its proxy warfare in the region, especially Yemen and Syria. He imposed fresh sanctions on Iran, targeting its oil and banking sectors. To keep the accord alive, despite the US withdrawal, Iran remained fully committed to it for a year but, in 2019, in response to the biting economic sanctions, it also breached the accord by enriching more uranium than the agreed cap. It also significantly curtailed the access of international inspectors to the nuclear sites.

Critics of the accord said the agreement is short-sighted because it binds Iran only for short time as the agreement has an expiry date. For instance, after ten years – from January 2016, the date the agreement came into force – restrictions on the number of centrifuges will be lifted. And after 15 years, the cap on the quantity of enriched uranium will be removed. Some of the opponents of the accord say that the accord would only delay Iran's building of a bomb and the sanction relief would prepare it for the same.

However, whatever the agreement, once agreed to its tenets, one cannot quit it on one's own. With great power, as they say, comes great responsibility. The US, being the world's sole superpower, should not have hastily abandoned such a landmark agreement. Even the staunch US allies chastised Trump's irrational withdrawal. To prevent further aggravation of an already fragile situation, several countries, the US allies among them, continued to import Iranian oil and traded with Iran outside the US banking system.

Accusing the US of breaching the accord, Iran started to enrich more uranium. In 2020, following the targeted killing of its military general Qasem Soleimani by the US and the assassination of its nuclear scientist allegedly by Israel, Iran sped up its uranium-enrichment activities.

Criticizing the Trump's withdrawal, the now-incumbent US president, Joe Biden, had promised, in his election campaign, to revive the Iran deal. He said that if Iran abides by the agreement, the US will again enter into it. Consequently, the JCPOA signatories, in April 2020, began parleys to bring back Washington and Tehran into the agreement. Many issues, including the Russia's attack on Ukraine and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' (IRGC) designation as a terrorist organization by the US, however, have halted the progress in talks. The US says it

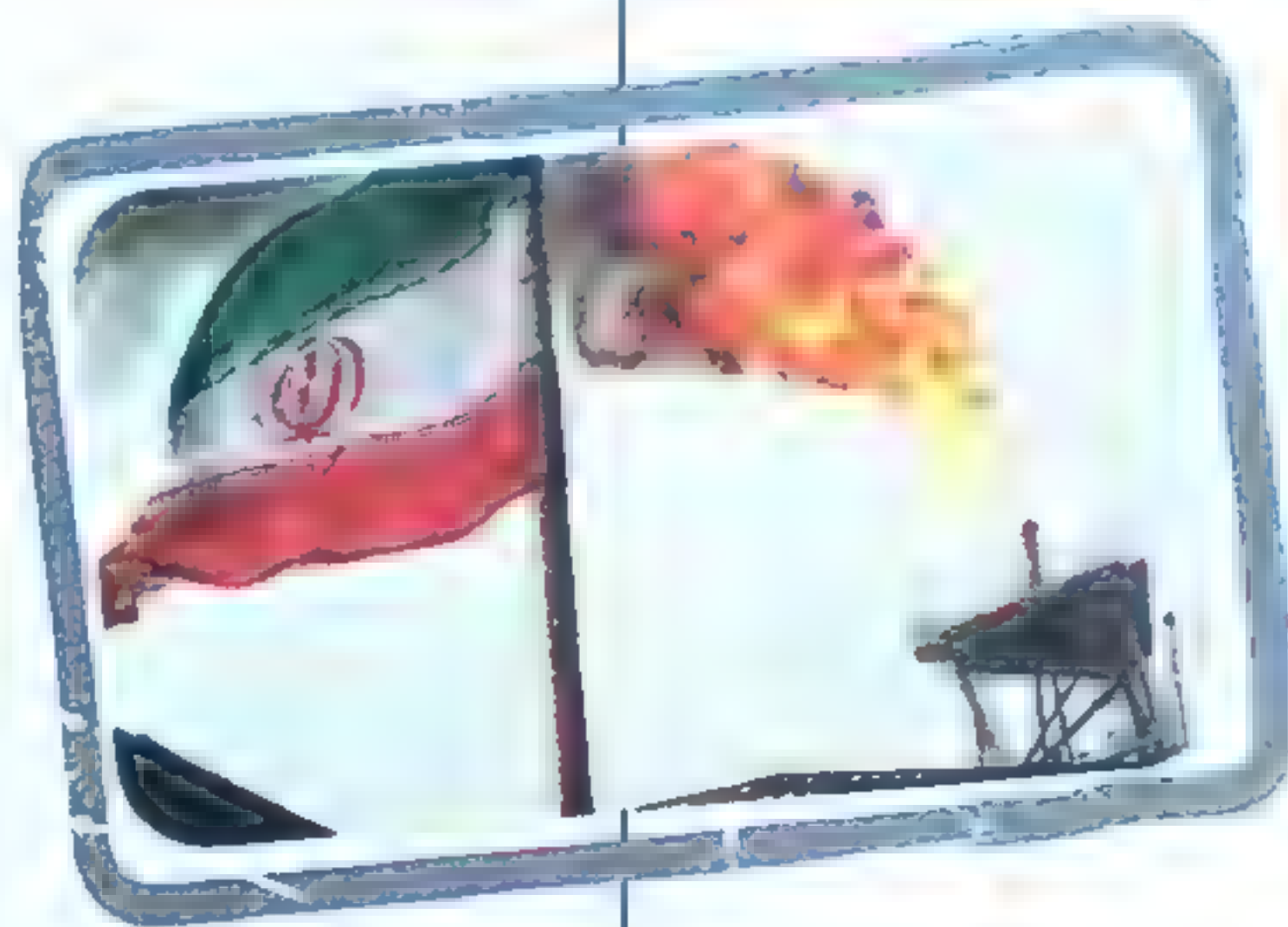
will only agree to the agreement on these prerequisites: retaining the IRGC on its terrorism blacklist, adding new conditions to the accord – such as the Iranian ballistic missile program, release of Western prisoners, and that Iran must quit its proxy wars in the region. On the other hand, Iran says it will re-enter the accord on the following terms: remove IRGC from the terrorism list, lifting of economic sanctions, no inclusion of new conditions and sanctions, and assurance from the US that it will not quit the deal in the future. By not yielding to each other's demands, some analysts are of the opinion that the Iran nuclear deal is now close to death.

However, for the sake of world's peace, both the parties should come in good terms with each other. If the US and EU are serious about the revival of the deal, they should consider Iranian demand and remove its worries. Both should take some confidence-building measures to remove the trust deficit that has been there since the inception of nuclear talks. On its part, the US should shun its war rhetoric, and should not clump all other issues for agreeing to the nuclear talks. The Western negotiators

should assure Tehran that they are negotiating with the latter in good faith. It should also lift sanctions from Iran so that the country may reap the fruits of the deal. On the other hand Iran should equally reciprocate by abiding by the deal and limiting its nuclear program for the sake of peace of the world. It should efficiently cash the easing of sanctions to re-build its shattering economy and give its people a better standard of life.

Additionally, the US should prevent Israel, which considers Iran as an existential threat, from scuttling the agreement. Israel has been trying to spoil the atmosphere for any future nuclear deal. The irresponsible talks from Israel threaten to scuttle the chances of any deal. For instance, its foreign minister has been quoted as saying that "we are more unhappy with [the nuclear] deal". Likewise, its military chief of staff has been reported to have said that his forces are ready "to deal with Iran and the military nuclear threat". Such reckless statements only aggravate the already volatile situation of the Middle East. Instead, it should show some statesmanship to ease the tense environment in the region. All the parties concerned should bury their hatchets and work for the world's peace. Give peace, as the famous saying goes, a chance! ■

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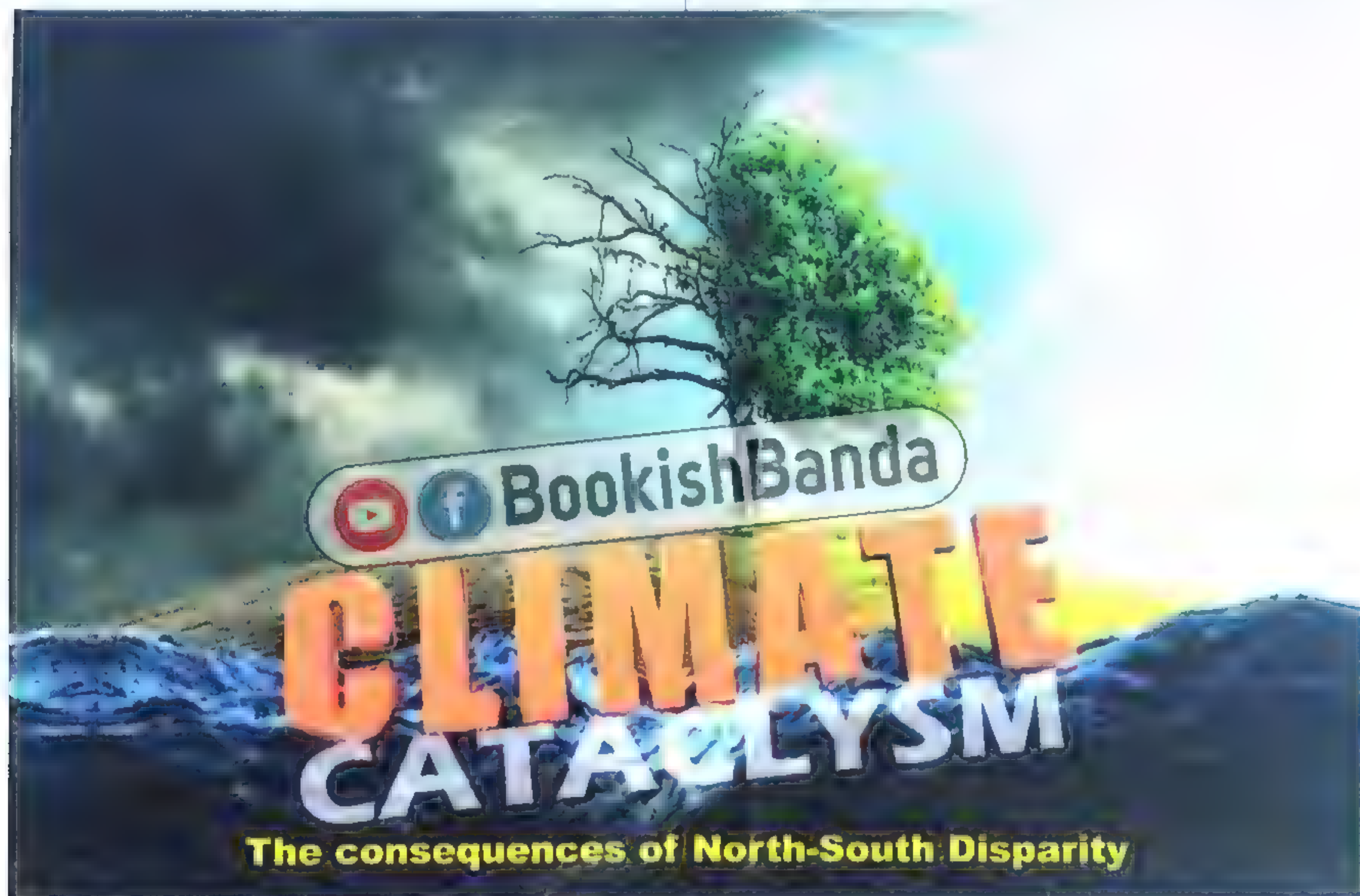


Time is ticking fast and so are the world and the worldviews. The narratives, which once led the humanity, have changed now as has the phenomenon of climate, though at a different pace. Now 'my problem' is not mine and 'your problem' is no more yours. The planet spins around and the problems too. The binary nature of the Earth is breeding an undeniable disparity. One is paying for what the other is doing; thus, augmenting the disparity. The emerging North-South conflict over the climate crisis has the same wounded patches. Without a qualm, climate change is a global problem hovering over the Himalayas to the Appalachians, though it differs in the magnitude of effects. The advancement made by the

campaign to hold individuals culprit for climate change. The consequences of this misdirection and futility of efforts in washing away the doubts have been disastrous for the planet in general; and the southern hemisphere in particular.

Meanwhile, those corporations that directly benefited from capitalism are protecting powerful political and economic interests. Capitalism with colonial 'extractivism' has made the South more vulnerable as the economies extracted natural resources such as minerals, coal, gas, oil, etc. from every corner of the world, leaving the developing countries poisoned, drained or otherwise destroyed.

To be sure about the grounds of the conflict between the developed and the developing countries, a recent study of



developed countries at the expense of the atmosphere as well as the developing countries has created a skewed relationship between the developed and the developing world. The contribution of developed countries in aggravating climate change is many a time more than the efforts put up by them to counter the menace.

As evident, climate change is denoted as the result of combined carbon emissions in the last two centuries. As much as 71 percent of global emissions are coming from the same 100 companies but none of them has acknowledged its adverse impact on the environment, let alone taking the responsibility for it. Instead, the thief has been threatening the constable by waging the 30-year-long

135 countries calculates that climate change could result in a loss of four percent of global annual economic output by 2050, and underprivileged parts of the world will be hit disproportionately hard. The exposure of Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and India to floods, water shortages, wildfires and major storms means South Asia has 10-18 percent of GDP at risk, estimating the treble of North America and 10 times higher than the least affected region, i.e. Europe, whereas when it comes to calculating the contribution, only the United States alone was responsible for 16 percent of the global emissions during President Trump's era. China, the United States, European Union countries, India, Russia and Brazil are considered the

largest contributors of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. On the whole, national climate policies of countries around the world may get undermined because of soaring emissions due to increasing global production fragmentation. The researchers, while analysing the fissure between production-based and consumption-based emissions, have established that the systematic outsourcing of emissions is done from developed countries to developing ones. Environmental consequences do not cease to be visible just because the manufacturing befalls on the other edge of the ocean. Facts unveiled by the study suggest that the carbon outsourcing was consistently carried out by the developed countries to developing ones between 1995 and 2009. The major blame for out- or in-sourcing was levelled on the deserved shoulders of the two world powers, the United States and China, in 2009. The observation also proved the inclination of developed countries to shifting relatively less carbon-intensive exports and more carbon-intensive imports at a snail's pace. This must ring bells for the policymakers since it does countervail part of the climate diminution achievements that have been blazoned by several advanced countries.

The world's poorest countries, which are grouped as 49 least developed countries (LDCs), with the per capita GDP (gross domestic product) under \$900, have low levels of capital, human and technological build-out, chip in little to the emission of greenhouse gases but they are the highest at risk to the upshot of climate change. These LDCs also do not have much adaption potential due to a lack of economic, institutional and financial capacity to survive with climate change repercussions and revamp the infrastructure wrecked by natural calamities. They will be hit hard and people will suffer more from the expected increase in natural destruction such as droughts and floods caused by the climate crisis. Soothing to say, the world's eyes have started observing it more closely. Even in their prosperous days, these LDCs are not able to pay the piper and have to rely on monetary aid from the advanced countries. Then, how can they bear the burden of the crisis precipitated by the other hemisphere? Willingly or unwillingly, they have to depend on external aid as they do not have the necessary funds available to deal with climate catastrophes. Adaptation to climate change has become a prime policy priority in the international negotiations on the climate crisis in the last few years; however, it has yet to become a paramount policy issue within the developing countries, especially the LDCs in Asia and Africa. The emerging economies' suspicions and sufferings of the southern hemisphere at the hands of the countries in the northern hemisphere are widening the gap and intensifying

the conflict between them. The visible concerns had been traced to the summit at Copenhagen in 2009 where many countries avoided making a binding commitment. Under deep suspicion that any obligations might threaten their developments, China, India, and growing economies rejected Europe's unilateral binding offer to cut 50 percent of its emissions, though a ray of hope has re-emerged in the recent Glasgow summit, i.e. COP26.

If the South will get hurt that bad, the North, too, will not remain in safe haven for long. The impacts of climate change such as higher temperatures, agricultural land becoming infertile, extreme weather events, and common famine will inevitably lead to mass migrations from the embattled global South to the more resilient North.

Factually, the contribution of developing countries in promoting climate change is minuscule as compared to that of developed countries. So, the northern hemisphere should shoulder more responsibility to mitigate the climate-change disaster and give financial assistance and transfer technology to developing countries and make all-out efforts to reduce their annual emissions. Since most of the countries are located in the southern hemisphere - and

most of them have not made any significant contribution to climate change - therefore, they should be allowed concession from IPCC and the global community.

The assistance fund under the UN has now an endowment of more than \$15 billion. The main stake of developing countries is that they want to

leverage financial assistance and technological cooperation from the developed countries. The old-fashioned carbon-trading scheme has been rejected by developing countries as the developed ones are of the view that green technologies are not cheap, and mandatory restrictions on emissions would also further reduce their economic growth. They have submitted that their burden should be shouldered by the developed countries by reducing their emissions in the first instance. In the second instance, technical and financial assistance should be generously given by developed countries, through UN-mandated frameworks, to the developing countries so that they may benefit from research in this field. The severity and sensitivity of the coming climate blow can only be pacified through unification, not division. Any further delay at the national and international level will miss a fast closing door to redeem a survivable future. ■

The writer has worked as a pedagogue (Literature & Language) in APSAPC.





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US-China Rivalry

Strategic competition
or a cold war?

M. Yasir Khan

Is there a cold war between the United States and China?

Short answer: No, but it is complicated.

The long answer is as under:

We should first clarify what we mean here. "Cold War" is a very specific historical term that has been conscripted as an analogy to describe what is going on between the United States and China.

And it should not be. Chinese academics themselves don't use the term "Cold War" to describe their current rivalry with the United States. They, instead, use the term "Competitive Coexistence". This is a far less hawkish term than what the Americans are using. And it's a correct one as well.

What the US and China have is a rivalry. This is incredibly different from what a cold war is. The cold war in the US meant an overall foreign policy that was zero-sum. There was no space for coexistence with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). It was an entity that was considered (at least initially) weak and destined to be destroyed over time by the US if it pursued certain policy actions such as "containment".

Rivals, however, compete with, not destroy, each other.

The use of the term "cold war" as an analogy to describe the current state of US-China relationship comes specifically from policymaking think tanks in the US. Even US historians reject using it as either an analogy or a framework for defining this relationship.

These US policymakers are holdovers from the Cold War era who seek to beef up their profile and maintain relevance in the 21st century by drawing parallels between the US-USSR cold war and the current US-China relations (perhaps hoping for renewals of their tenure). Kissinger, the current war criminal in the US hire, is one of the biggest proponents of using "Cold War" to describe US-China relations ("We are in the foothills of a new cold war" is what he said).

If the US chooses to let these holdovers define the country's policy towards China today, then it won't be any surprise if it creates a self-fulfilling prophecy and drags the US into an unnecessary confrontation with a rival that never needed to turn into an escalated conflict.

The other major error of using the Cold War as an analogy for the current US-China relations is because the context of the Cold War was so astronomically different from what you have today that it's lazy and criminally irresponsible to apply this analogy to US-China rivalry unless you are Bolton and want war. Here are a few points to ponder over:

1. The Cold War occurred in the aftermath of nearly 30 years of two major global conflicts and a Great Depression. Current US-China relations are in the aftermath of 30 years of peace, though under the declining US Hegemony.
2. The Cold war was in the aftermath of 30 years of rising tariffs and closed economic systems. Currently, we are seeing downward trends in tariffs overall and open economic integration.
3. The Cold war was in the aftermath of 30 years of the USSR's economic isolation. Currently, the US-China rivalry is under the shadow of 30 years of Chinese economic presence in the global economy.
4. The Cold War was in the aftermath of vast destruction across Europe and Asia with Germany and Japan completely decimated and occupied. China was in a civil war. Huge vacuums of power surrounded the Soviet Union. And in these vacuums of power, massive revolutionary and decolonization movements were emerging that were ridding the old powers of their holdings in the soon-to-be ex-colonies.

Today, China is surrounded by a resurgent Japan, a major regional power in the form of India, an assertive Russia and a

wealthy, industrialized South Korea. 5. The Cold War came when capitalism was in disrepute as it was blamed for two World Wars and a Great Depression. French and Italian communist parties were on the verge of winning elections in their respective countries. Marxist-Leninist ideas and central planning that led to rapid economic growth and industrialization were

industrial material and human labour that allowed them to wage an effective war against the US. The USSR after WWII appeared to be able to present the same threat as its ideological appeal in vast power vacuums, its military strength and (then) impending US withdrawal from Germany and China appeared to give it a close chance of gaining

ideological appeal of their citizens over the others. George F. Kennan a career Foreign Service Officer, formulated the policy of "containment," the basic United States strategy for fighting the cold war - himself stressed that the US needs to demonstrate, at a time when democratic capitalism was considered weaker than communism and central planning, that Japan, Germany, the US and the UK could establish democratic capitalism and improve the lives of their citizens immensely. The USSR was doing the same with Communism and Central Planning.

The US has not responded to the rise of China by somehow trying to adopt policies that improve the lives of their citizens at a time when their political institutions are faltering, mostly because they don't see China's system as having vast appeal beyond their borders.

The two axioms of the Cold War that drove the containment policy of the US towards the USSR were:

a. The US and USSR were such ideological opponents that there could be no coexistence between them. Both believed the other was out to destroy their way of life. Kennen believed that the USSR was fundamentally a weaker entity that would back down in the face of strong US resolve and containment.

b. Neither of these is true today. China is not seeking to destroy the US way of life nor is it weak as an entity the way the USSR was (at least that's what Kennen believed based on his observations of the inner workings of the USSR's economy and political system).

The Cold War was also something that integrated ideology, geopolitics and economics into one overarching struggle between the USSR and US. The USSR was also feared as a threat by the US because it was able to create massive geopolitical opportunities due to its immense ideological appeal. And the USSR had intentions to exploit those geopolitical opportunities.



immensely popular as ideas in revolutionary movements sweeping across Asia and Africa. The Cold War was under the shadow of socialism's mass appeal. The Labor party was voted into power in the UK as it called for the nationalization of major industries and the implementation of social welfare programmes. The USSR had vast ideological appeal as an entity promoting social justice and equality.

This is not what the case is today. China does not offer the ideological appeal of the same kind and its message is one of nationalist, not globalist, ethos: "Socialism with Chinese characteristics".

6. The geostrategic threat today is completely different. Back during the Cold War, the key policy message was: that the US must not allow an adversary to gain power in Europe and Asia. This is because, during WWII, Germany's and Japan's conquest of vast land holdings in Europe and Asia allowed them to amass enormous resources,

control of similar vast economic resources.

This is not China. It is nowhere near the same geostrategic threat as the USSR during the 40s and 50s. The South China Sea islands are not the same as the USSR's contest for power in Poland and Romania. The Spratly Islands dispute is not the same as the tense movements to control Germany.

7. The risks taken during the Cold War were much larger due to the higher stakes (control of Europe and Asia) at play. Containment of the USSR as a policy was pursued due to the belief that it was making major inroads across the world, especially when China fell to the Reds after the Chinese civil war ended.

This is not what China is doing today, nor can it do this today.

8. The Cold War, being a rivalry of political and economic systems, also resulted in the US and USSR competing to form systems that improved the quality of life for their citizens so they could showcase the

To think that China has a similar ideological appeal across the globe that can be exploited as geopolitical opportunities is almost delusional. Similarly, Kennen believed that the US could push ahead with major risks like the Berlin Airlift and containment because:

1. He believed the USSR was much weaker;
2. The US had a nuclear monopoly; and
3. There were no economic interconnections between the US and USSR.

While China's military still lags behind the US, to an extent, all three of the above are not true today. And to base US risk-taking off of them with respect to China is a major disaster waiting to happen. Instead of realizing the fundamental common interests between the US and China on preventing pandemics, curbing the spread of nuclear weapons, preventing a conflict in Korea or South Asia and combating climate change, this Cold War analogy sets both up for an unnecessary conflict.

To double down on the above points about how the Cold War analogy is so false, we need to acknowledge that the period of the Cold war was the tail end of a period when the world was gripped by major insecurities due to scarcity.

We seem to have forgotten about Malthusian ideas that the world population was growing so rapidly and so out of pace with agricultural output that we would soon face global starvation on an unprecedented scale.

There were massive wars of conquest over land and resources during this period of time, with ideology serving as the mobilizing basis for such conflicts, all the way from the French Revolution to the 1960s and 70s.

As Dr. Francis Gavin puts it, this period of scarcity and crises has been replaced since then by a period where the problem is a problem of plenty. We have too much now. Whether it's the climate change crisis (rooted in too much industrialization

and consumption), the obesity crisis, the opioid crisis.

So the institutional framework or the political institutions that were developed during the cold war or that rely on the cold war as an analogy will look at the world through the lenses of great power conflicts that were fueled by scarcity. Which is not the nature of our world today and the nature of the US-China rivalry. Why wouldn't you use political institutions here to resolve these issues that are geared to deal with the problem of too much

and taken over. They had the military muscle and proximity for it.

So why doesn't modern-day China do that as well?

Hong Kong is one of the 3 primary capital markets in the world today besides NY and London. It's the go-to place in the world when you want to raise significant capital.

The primary power of Hong Kong is the trillions of dollars in capital that the Hong Kong Banks sit on and its draw as a financial center in the world. It's the fact that Goldman Sachs is there. It's the fact that if



consumption, too much information, too much free flow of money, too much trade and so on?

I might be beating a dead horse at this point but I just want to give an example of how dangerous it can be and how badly the US can get it wrong if they frame the China of today with the same cold war lens as the 1945- 1991 period.

For this example, let's take Hong Kong.

If it was the 1950s and the Chinese wanted to take Hong Kong, they probably would have just invaded

you're an exec in the financial world, you would probably choose to live in Hong Kong and raise a family there cause it's a great city and it has a powerful, well-integrated financial system there.

Invading Hong Kong means Goldman Sachs leaves. It means capital flight. It means no more fancy bankers choosing to live there.

The CPC knows this which is why all of its political moves toward Hong Kong are carefully calibrated to ensure Hong Kong's capital stays put and it remains a financial center. Because the CPC is under no delusions that if that money leaves, it's gonna come to Shanghai. It won't, it's gonna go to London or NYC. Which the CPC wants to avoid at all costs.

Think of this for a minute and understand how differently the CPC is acting here compared to the CPC that was dealing with Taiwan during the island crises of the 1950s. ■

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Education is sine qua non for a country's peace, stability and prosperity. It is a fact that only a country with educated population can achieve socioeconomic development and political stability. For instance, the Scandinavian countries enjoy a respectable position in

the comity of nations because they have high literacy rates. In fact, education is the decisive factor that puts a nation on the path of development and prosperity. Having immense importance, education decides the rise and fall of a nation. For example, most scholars believe that USSR collapsed because of its ideology, i.e. Communism; however, it was, in fact, the lack of education that led to the disintegration of this once-mighty power.

Education promotes political stability, rule of law and good governance. It is a known fact that the more a society is educated, the more the harmony there. Also, it creates a vibrant civil society which is indispensable for a state's

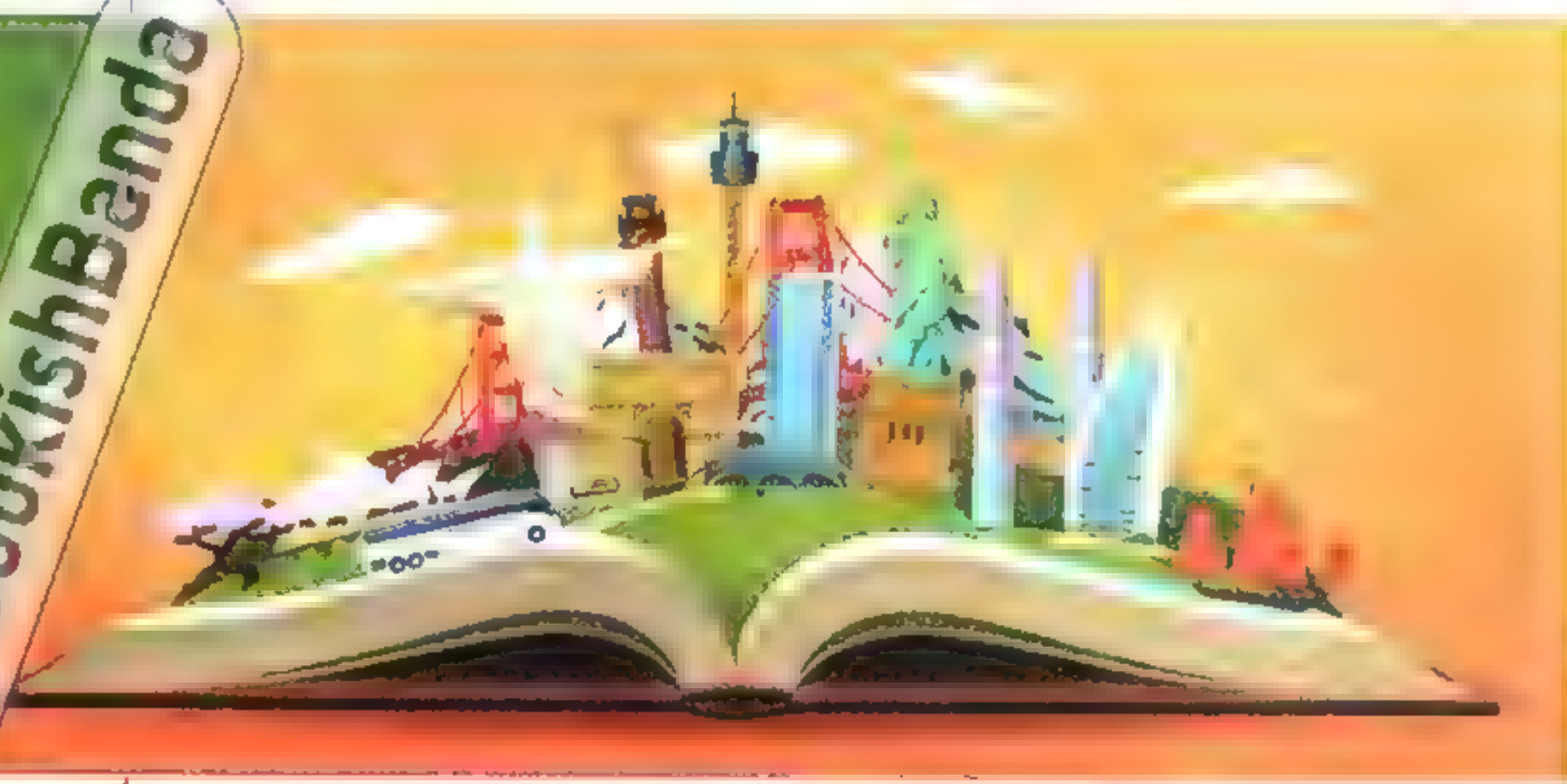
Movement to provide modern education to his countrymen.

Education creates a vibrant civil society, leading to economic development. A vibrant civil society is the one that has high literacy rate, productive labour and political consciousness. It is a known fact that a nation with high literacy, skilled labour and politically aware people can secure a respectable place in the global community. As a result, it leads to political stability, economic prosperity and good governance. Also, a vigilant civil society promotes rule of law, which paves the way for better law and order and social security. Overall, it advocates democratic culture, which is indispensable for a thriving democracy. Thus, education is vital for making a robust civil society, which is the prerequisite of a developed and civilized nation.

Back home in Pakistan, the education system is characterized with numerous deficiencies and lacunae. It has been

Education Decides the Future

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socioeconomic and political growth. In short, the role of education in the development of a state is wide and critically important as well.

Another reason to believe in the importance of education is that only those countries lag socially, economically and politically behind that remain unable to impart quality education to their peoples. The case study of Pakistan is a perfect manifestation in this regard as education is the least priority of the state. As a result, the country has been facing political instability, economic decline, and poor governance since ages. Hence, it is proved that education, the foundation of development, is a basic prerequisite for a nation's peace, stability and prosperity.

Education has been of huge importance in the history as well. For example, the foundations of Plato's ideal state rest on education. In other words, Plato's ideal state is nothing without education. Similarly, at the time of freedom movement in the Subcontinent, a towering personality, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, asserted, time and again, that the solution to Muslims' miseries is in acquiring education. Knowing the importance and power of the pen and knowledge, he started the Aligarh

movement to provide modern education to his countrymen. Education creates a vibrant civil society, leading to economic development. A vibrant civil society is the one that has high literacy rate, productive labour and political consciousness. It is a known fact that a nation with high literacy, skilled labour and politically aware people can secure a respectable place in the global community. As a result, it leads to political stability, economic prosperity and good governance. Also, a vigilant civil society promotes rule of law, which paves the way for better law and order and social security. Overall, it advocates democratic culture, which is indispensable for a thriving democracy. Thus, education is vital for making a robust civil society, which is the prerequisite of a developed and civilized nation. Back home in Pakistan, the education system is characterized with numerous deficiencies and lacunae. It has been rightly said that the education system of Pakistan has failed to produce efficient human resource. Sadly, according to the Bureau of Statistics, Pakistan has 63 percent literacy rate - and only 20 percent students achieve higher education. Consequently, Pakistan is devoid of a vibrant civil society which is why the country is socially divided, economically fragile and politically unstable. Hence, the case study of Pakistan also corroborates the fact that only those countries remain under-developed that keep education at a low priority, as in Pakistan's case.

In conclusion, it is pertinent to say that education is the most important tool that leads a state to socio-economic development and political stability. In the powerful words of Nelson Mandela, the late President of South Africa, "Education is a weapon which you can use to change the world." Going beyond, if a country wants peace, stability, and prosperity, education is the only way forward. Similarly, in Pakistan's case, only imparting quality education to its people is the panacea for all social ills, economic backwardness and political uncertainty. ■

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Excellent writing skills are an important part of techniques all aspirants appearing in CSS competitive examination must be equipped with because they make you better able to communicate your points or arguments to the examiner with great clarity and ease. However, it must be understood that writing aptly and succinctly goes beyond the simple use of grammar; there are many other aspects which must be taken care of.

What is poor writing?

An analysis of CE-2019 Examiners Reports, published by Federal Public Service Commission, reveals that most candidates fail the papers just because they have poor writing skills. The report says, "Problems of writing, language and expressions have been widely noticed. Some of the responses were so senseless that they didn't seem to be the answers of a candidate appearing for CSS."

Besides, mock exams for CSS conducted by World Times Institute also reveal that the principal difference between the candidates who scored excellent marks and those who couldn't was that of writing skills as individuals in the former lot wrote answers in flawless language; they knew the art of using right word and punctuation marks at the right place. On the other hand, those in the latter category had poor writing skills as most of them seemed struggling to find words or phrases that would perfectly fall in place with the content. They also made an overuse of clichés, adverbs, bulky phrases, etc. Thus poor writing resulted in lower marks for them. And there is no doubt at all that poor writing creates poor first impressions, leading to an immediate negative reaction

from the examiner.

How to learn this art?

By all means, writing is an art and like every other form of art, it takes time and perseverance to learn it. Although it is considered a difficult skill to learn, here are some of the most pragmatic solutions to addressing the challenges of improving your writing skills.

1. Read a lot

We learn best by example, and gaining writing skills is no exception to this rule. So, the best way you can enhance your writing skills is by reading as much as you can. Reading opens your mind to new ideas, new words and new techniques. It allows you to know how other writers express their ideas and the numerous ways they use to accomplish that. The more you study how successful writers write, the easier it becomes for you to write well.

Take any newspaper, magazine, novel or book, and make it your habit to read at least two articles, or 3-5 pages of a book a day. Reading will give you an idea of how sentences are formed, how you can phrase your words in dialogues and what are the different styles of writing. And reading will also help you discover your own writing style. Incorporate daily reading into your writing exercises; maybe even make your practice paragraph a review or summary of what you read that day, taking different elements of the author's writing style to develop your own voice.

2. A focused environment

This is highly important for writers. To write effectively and also to give your best, you need an environment with minimum or no distractions. So when you decide to write, put away your phone, turn off the TV and sit down somewhere quiet and peaceful. The more you are able to focus, the better you can write, in terms of both quality and quantity.

WRITE LIKE A PRO

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How to improve your writing skills

Man, undoubtedly, is the most expressive creature of Allah Almighty. He makes use of both spoken and written words to convey the intended message. Hence, writing, apart from the spoken word, is one of the world's oldest forms of communication that still exists. So, the art of aptly describing what's on your mind boils down to your writing or speaking abilities and skills. If we see it in the context of competitive examinations, especially CSS and PMS, no one would deny that these exams test the writing skills of the aspirants. Writing plain English in a paper like that of Essay is no big challenge, yet eliminating the nuances from your writing to present your arguments effectively becomes a massive challenge for many. Even if one's chosen career path doesn't necessarily involve writing as a form of income, being able to communicate effectively is incredibly important to ensure success in today's competitive international job market. Think about email-writing; it hardly looks professional if an employee sends an email to his/her boss or colleague that isn't well thought-out and contains many errors. This will definitely be viewed seriously and would negatively reflect on the intellectual acumen of the person writing it.

You also need to figure out the time when your brain functions the best. It can be early morning or late at night.

3. Practice, practice and practice

Practice is the key in polishing any skill. And, no doubt, practice really does make perfect. It's not a T20 match; rather you should be taking it like a test match. If you compare writing to a skill like cooking, or even playing a sport, you cannot expect to improve if you don't practice - it's like expecting to become a pro cricketer after one practice with your team.

Take a paper and pen, and just write what comes to your mind. Try to set yourself daily writing exercises - they need not be long-winded and time-consuming, even just committing yourself to write a paragraph a day is enough. This way you will open your mind to the possibility of writing the same message in a number of ways. You can even partner up with a fellow aspirant who also wants to improve his/her writing skills and read each other's paragraphs to see where changes or improvements need to be made.

4. Vary your sentence structure

As you write, try to vary your sentence structure to give your writing rhythm. A mix of short and long sentences with different literary devices can keep the reader interested and create a natural flow that guides them through your writing.

5. Read it aloud

Once you are done with writing a piece - of whatever length - read it aloud!

This way you can clearly point out any grammatical mistakes you may have made, and you would also notice any imbalanced phrase and sentences that need further editing. Reading aloud also helps you hear any awkward phrasing and get an idea of your overall tone and effectiveness. CAROL Loomis, an American financial journalist, who retired in 2014 as senior editor of Fortune magazine, once wrote, *"Writing itself makes you realise where there are holes in your thinking. I am never sure what I think unless I see what I write. I believe the analysis part of you kicks in when you sit down to construct a story or even a sentence."*

6 Review it

There is nothing more frustrating than a piece of writing that doesn't get straight to the point. Think about what you want to say, what message you want the examiner to take away, and make sure that you make this message clear from the very beginning.

7. Seek feedback

It is always a good idea to seek feedback from someone who is well-versed with writing, in order to improve your skills and enhance the quality of your work. It can be your teacher, your parent or anyone else, but make sure it is not someone who himself has no idea what writing is all about!

It is nothing to be ashamed of if they point out your mistakes or your weak areas. Think of this as an opportunity to improve. Remember, successful people are always open to criticism and feedback.

7. Never give up!

As clichéd as it may sound to most of us, it is a vital ingredient for success! When you

first start writing, you will feel like giving up a lot of times because of many reasons - your writing does not meet your expectations, it is not as good when compared to someone else's work, your first few pieces of work did not get published in magazines, you did not receive the praise and appreciation you were expecting or someone gave a negative feedback about your work - this list does not exhaust! Remember, great results never come easy. J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter got rejected by 12 publishing houses before becoming a worldwide success! In Richard Bach's words, *"A professional writer is an amateur who didn't quit."*

Note: Sometimes it happens even with good writers that they try to write something but the words won't come. This is called writer's block; it is a temporary inability to write and is pretty common in writers. So, if you face something like this, don't worry, face it. Keep on reading and writing, this problem will surely be solved within no time.

8. Some other tips

- Good writing is clear and concise. Say exactly what you mean in the most direct way.
- Don't use any complicated, long words in your writing. Use familiar vocabulary instead of lofty words from the English language. Simple words are more direct and easier to understand.
- Keep your sentences short yet impactful. Short sentences are easier to comprehend, something that examiners appreciate. Avoid trying to pack too much into a line.
- Keep your paragraphs short and manageable. Each one should consist of sentences that support the same idea.
- Use the active voice and adhere to subject-verb-object sentence structure. It's the most direct path to making your point.
- Never over-use filler words like "very", "really", "just", etc. They tend to make sentences long and unnecessarily take up the examiner's cognitive space.
- Write error-free pieces. Errors in your writing are likely to take attention away from the message you are trying to convey.
- Always write by putting yourself in the examiner's shoes.

Conclusion

Every work you do is fuelled by the passion you have for that work in your heart. A person having consummate writing skills is an artist who uses words as crayons, and paper as canvas; and paints a splendid landscape with his words, expression and style. You also need to be an artist and to be so, you should have the passion to explore your inner world and come up with great ideas and words that make up attractive sentences, which will certainly impress the examiner; a sure-shot way to success. ■

The writer is a student at KLMU, Lahore.



AS

automation transforms professions, many of the currently popular professions are expected to become obsolete within the next 10 years and be replaced by new ones. With technology advancing at an ever-faster pace, many jobs have been computerized or are becoming a thing of the past. In the near future, professions in the field of robotics and data science will increase in popularity, and areas that require manual labor will vanish into thin air.

new professions may emerge in the future. By making the right decision by taking into account the ratio of automation in the field of their choice and the future of their profession in their university preferences, students will be able to meet their potential in the future. Universities that focus on professions of the future and add these fields to their education systems will also gain more prominence. We have compiled for you a list that includes these professions, which are getting more popular with every passing day.

Haseeb Ali

develop their knowledge with courses on topics such as machine-learning algorithms, software production cycle, data entry setup, data mining, and pattern matching.

Interest in robotics engineering increases with every passing year

Robotics engineering, which focuses on developing robots and robotic systems, is a frequent topic of discussion when it comes to future professions. As engineers working in this field focus on the production, design and operation of robots, the technologies developed boast a wide field of operation — from automotive

PROFESSIONS OF THE

FUTURE



BookishBanda

Breakthrough careers revealed

The world's accelerated digital transformation, especially with the emergence of the novel Covid-19, has led to increased potential in these fields at an even faster pace. Furthermore, the work from home model and other innovations in our professional lives seem to have precipitated a change in career choices. Innovative departments are now among the popular choices of university hopefuls.

Artificial Intelligence is radically altering professions

Research indicates that the role of artificial intelligence in business is increasing with every passing day. Experts point out that at least two-thirds of current jobs could be performed by artificial intelligence within the next ten years. In addition to software and artificial intelligence-based departments that are gradually expanding their sphere of influence in the work environment, completely

Mastering artificial intelligence

Artificial intelligence engineering, which programs machines to work stably and designs machine-learning algorithms, is expected to dominate global sectors within a short time. As artificial intelligence engineers, who program machines to perform movements logically and efficiently, can find employment at software companies, they may also become sought-after employees at hospitals, factories and service sectors in the future. Taking into account the fact that automation will spread to many fields, we can easily say that the artificial intelligence engineering that will power them is one of the most prominent professions of the future. Candidates who graduated from relevant departments at universities can



to aviation, from the defense industry to nuclear power. Although students who graduate from the mechatronics department of universities do not fully study robotic systems engineering, they can increase their employment chances in this field through the elective courses they take on robotics at their respective universities. It is expected that interest in robotics engineering, which is a promising department, will increase even more in the coming years, as investments in this field are also skyrocketing.

Cyber security: a future staple

As the pace of changes and innovations in the digital field continues to accelerate, cyber threats targeting digital platforms are also increasing at the same rate. The employment of cyber security experts is gradually expanding to counter information and operational security threats in cyber environments, prevent risks and combat threats. Cyber Security is divided into subcategories that include cyber intelligence, operating systems security, network security, endpoint security and mobile systems security. Graduates from departments such as computer engineering, software engineering, and information systems engineering can get a job in this field.

As states, institutions and companies continue to invest in cyber security, over 100 million cyber data leaks have occurred around the world. Therefore, the need for cyber security experts continues to increase.

nues to increase.

A great need for software developers

Software and app development are perhaps the professions that have matured the fastest out of all the occupations we have mentioned so far. As the number of digital applications in our lives increases with every passing day, all the applications that run on these platforms are the fruits of the labor of app and software developers. Developers, who specialize and work on different platforms, can provide services in different fields such as software development, web application development, and mobile app development. Like many professions utilizing digital channels that have become a part of our daily lives, software and application developers are among the most lucrative professions of the future.

The profession of the digital generation: drone piloting

Having attracted great interest in almost every field recently, drones are now going mainstream with every passing day. For this reason, interest in drone piloting, which is one of the most important professions of the future, is increasing rapidly. Drones, or unmanned aerial vehicles will be able to carry every shipment within the next decade. Commercial training for drone piloting is divided into two categories: UAV 0 and UAV 1. Those who acquire UAV 0 training can fly drones between 500 grams and 4 kilograms, while a drone pilot who has received UAV 1 training will have the authority to fly vehicles between 500 grams and 25 kilograms. Any drone, which includes all unmanned aerial vehicles in every field from inspection to hobby shooting, is set to become a tool of a profession that will only gain more prominence.

Digital marketing: the new face of commerce

As billions of users leave their digital footprints on social media platforms every day, increasing personal or brand awareness can only be carried out through the employment of digital marketing expertise. These

platforms, which are the biggest communication channels of the present, will be entrusted to digital marketing experts in the future. As these specialists continue to gain more prominence in brand management with every passing day, it would not be too far-fetched to say that individuals who have been trained in this field will get their dream jobs. Apart from that, occupations such as virtual reality specialists, 3D printing engineers, smart city architects, and 5G developers are among the professions of the future.

Experts on climate change needed across the globe

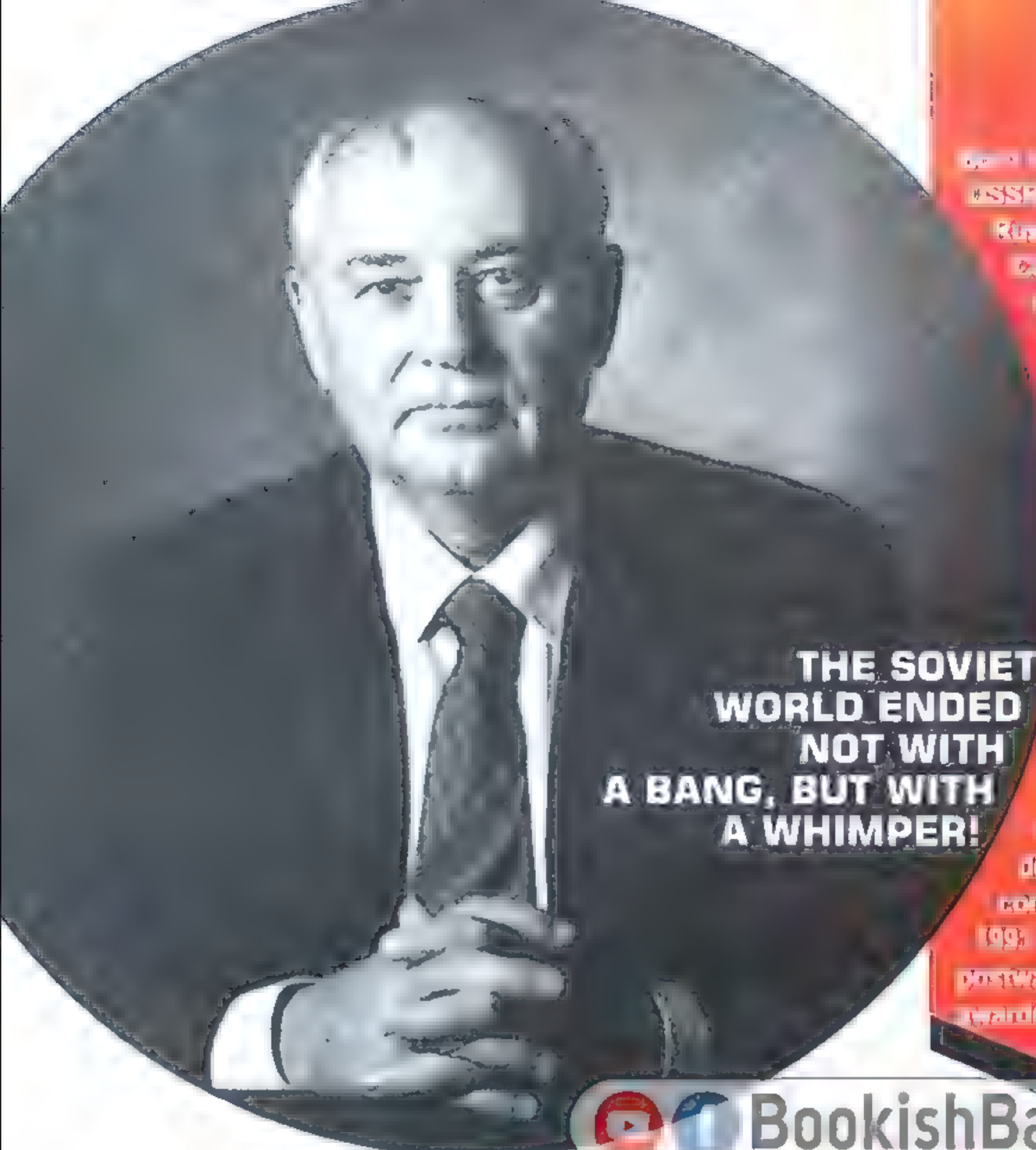
With global climate change in full swing, studies in this field are becoming ever more frequent. Climate engineering to improve and analyze these weather conditions is only set to carry more importance in the future.

Expertise in renewable energy in demand

Investments in the field of renewable energy, which is increasing its share of the pie in global energy markets with every passing day, are expected to exponentially soar in the coming years. Therefore, renewable energy and energy efficiency are some of the most important fields of this century and are considered among rising professions. Renewable energy experts, thanks to increasing investments, can make a name for themselves in the future through their work in this field.

Augmented reality one of the most promising fields

Augmented reality, which is a kind of simulation where virtual objects are superimposed on real images by using devices equipped with object recognition, will continue to be at the forefront of developing technologies. Specialists in this field can count on significant job opportunities that involve designing and producing this virtual world. This career path, which generates excitement for the future, is said to become one of the most popular professions in the years to come. □



**THE SOVIET
WORLD ENDED
NOT WITH
A BANG, BUT WITH
A WHIMPER!**

  **BookishBanda**

Mikhail Gorbachev (1931-2022) was the last leader of the Soviet Union. He was born in 1931 in the village of Privolnoye, near Gorky (now Nizhny Novgorod). He joined the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1955 and worked in various capacities for the party. In 1970, he became the first secretary of the regional party committee in Stavropol. In 1978, he became the official General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) from 1985 to 1991, and president of the Soviet Union from 15 March 1990 to 25 December 1991. His efforts to democratize the country's political system and decentralize its economy led to the downfall of communism and the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991. In 1990, he ended the Soviet Union's colonial domination of Eastern Europe. Gorbachev was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1990.

MIKHAIL

GORBACHEV (1931-2022)

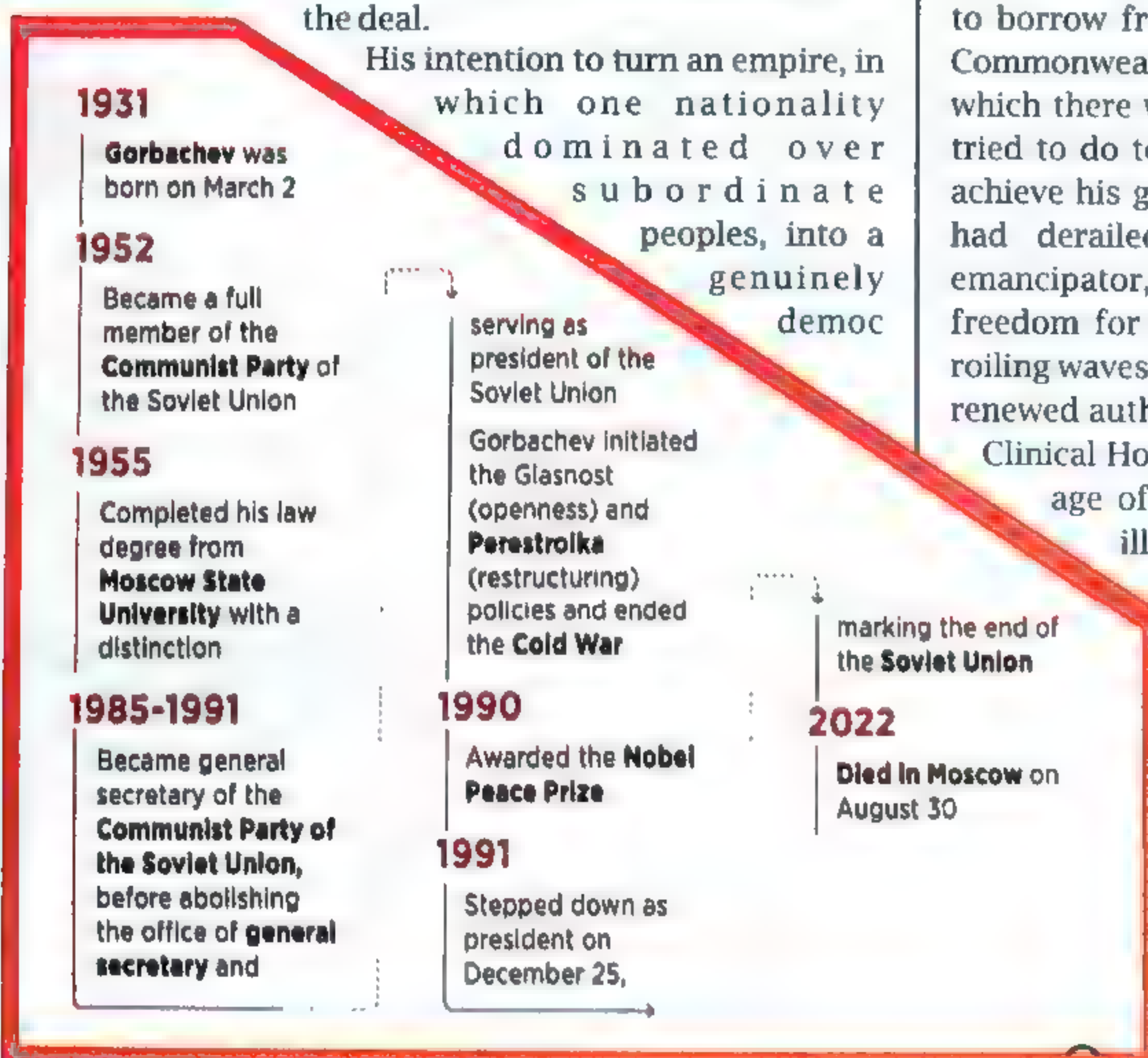


Gorbachev was a controversial figure; his legacy was complex. Hailed in the West as a democrat and liberator of his people - which he genuinely was - he increasingly became despised by many within Russia for destroying the Soviet Union and dismantling a great power. The invasion of Ukraine is, in part, an attempt to reverse the loss of status felt in post-Cold War Russia by the disintegration of the Soviet Union that occurred under Gorbachev - something Vladimir Putin views as "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century". In a sense, the unravelling of the Soviet Union that began 30 years ago is still going on, in the bloody war in Ukraine. In the 1970s and 1980s, the image of the USSR in the West was of a giant nuclear-armed Communist country, a revolutionary, expansionist state, seriously threatening the "free world". But it was, in reality, economically stagnating, socially conservative and politically quite fragile. By the late 1980s, Gorbachev was caught between a

Hassaan Bin Zubair

conservative elite, which feared change, and self-styled democrats, led by his nemesis, Boris Yeltsin, who clamoured for more radical change. Of course, that is not how he is perceived in the West. After enduring Western suspicions when he first came to power that he was simply a wolf in sheep's clothing, an insincere reformer who was a hard-line communist, Gorbachev managed to convince the sceptics abroad of his sincerity. Former UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher found in Gorbachev someone she could 'do business with'. Then, through her, US President Ronald Reagan came around to the view that Gorbachev was indeed an authentic dismantler of the Soviet command system. Early fears in the West evolved into anxiety about Gorbachev's survival as he embarked on his great project. He was a reformer aspiring to be a revolutionary from above, wanting to liberalize and democratize his country to save socialism. But, in the process, he ended up undermining socialism as the major alternative to

Western neoliberal capitalism. His rushed reforms to modernize the Soviet Union were overtaken by developments on the ground that saw the socialist project fall, to be replaced by a new era in Russia marked by growing nationalism and renewed authoritarianism. Once he achieved the highest position in the party, i.e. of general secretary; in 1985, he embarked on a pell-mell program of reform. It was centered on two ideas, "perestroika," the restructuring of the political and economic system, and "glasnost" the end of censorship, and the introduction of freedom of speech and the press. But from the start, the economic reforms proved to be flawed. Mammoth problems, including the fall in the world price of oil — the USSR's greatest source of foreign exchange — a devastating earthquake in Armenia, and the Chernobyl nuclear disaster impoverished the country and eroded Gorbachev's popularity at home. His foreign policy achievements, the withdrawal from the war in Afghanistan, liberating the Soviet satellite states in East Central Europe, and the reduction of nuclear arms won him friends abroad. But many of his closest comrades at home, particularly in the military and KGB, the state security service, were appalled by his surrender of what they considered the gains from the victory over fascism in World War II. On Gorbachev's watch, the Soviet Union rapidly declined from a superpower into a pathetically weak state begging for financial help from the George H.W. Bush administration, which never came through. He allowed the two German states, separated during the Cold War by the Berlin Wall, into a Western and a Soviet-controlled sector, to reunite without gaining much from the deal.



His intention to turn an empire, in which one nationality dominated over subordinate peoples, into a genuinely democratic federation of equal nations was approved by more than three-quarters of those who voted in a referendum in March 1991. But a few months later, that plan floundered when some of his generals and secret police agents launched a coup against him. The plotters failed, but the winner of the three-day standoff was not Gorbachev, but Yeltsin. In early December, three inebriated leaders of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus met in a forest setting in the absence of Gorbachev, where they came up with a hastily conceived plan to break up the USSR and abolish Gorbachev's presidency. The dissolution of the Soviet Union was the process of internal disintegration within the Soviet Union (USSR) which resulted at the end of the country's and its federal government's existence as a sovereign state, thereby resulting in its constituent republics gaining full sovereignty on 26 December 1991. It brought an end to Mikhail Gorbachev's effort to reform the Soviet political and economic system, with an aim to stop a period of political stalemate and economic backslide. The Soviet Union had experienced internal stagnation and ethnic separatism. The USSR, although a highly centralized state, was made up of 21 republics that served as homelands for different ethnicities. By late 1991, amidst a catastrophic political crisis, with several republics already departing the Union and the waning of centralized power, the leaders of three of its founding members declared that the Soviet Union no longer existed. Eight more republics joined their declaration shortly thereafter. Gorbachev resigned in December 1991 and what was left of the Soviet parliament voted to end itself. The Soviet world ended "not with a bang, but a whimper,"

to borrow from the poet T.S. Eliot. A weak, ineffective Commonwealth of Independent States was established in which there would be no role for Gorbachev. Gorbachev tried to do too much, too fast without the resources to achieve his goals. By 1990, his weakness and indecision had derailed the revolution from above. A great emancipator, Gorbachev left a mixed legacy. He expanded freedom for millions but, at the same time, unleashed roiling waves of nationalism and left the upturned soil for renewed authoritarianism. Gorbachev died at the Central Clinical Hospital in Moscow on 30 August 2022, at the age of 91. He died after a severe and prolonged illness, according to the hospital, having been under the continuous supervision of doctors since the beginning of 2020. As requested in his will, Gorbachev was buried in Moscow's Novodevichy Cemetery, next to his wife Raisa, who died in 1999. Gorbachev was the longest-lived ruler of Russia in history. ■

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Aug-Sept
22



BookishBanda

NATIONAL

M. Usman Butt



Aug. 16: The Punjab Assembly unanimously passed the Punjab Prohibition of Interest on Private Loan Bill, 2022, a bill to impose a ban on private business of usury.

Aug. 16: UAE President Mohammad bin Zayed bestowed his country's highest civil award, "Order of Zayed," on Pakistan Chief of Army Staff Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa (COAS Gen. Bajwa).

Aug. 16: The 2021 Global Hunger Index jointly compiled by Welthungerhilfe and Concern Worldwide, ranked Pakistan 92 among 116 countries with a score of 24.7, declaring its hunger levels 'serious'.

Aug. 17: The 21st Session of the Joint Economic Commission (JEC) between Pakistan and Iran was held in Islamabad.

Aug. 17: The British government signed a new agreement with Pakistan which will see the return of criminals and immigration offenders from London to Islamabad.

Aug. 17: Renowned cartoonist and animator Irshad Haider Zaidi passed away.

Aug. 17: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) cabinet approved the establishment of biosphere reserve in the province.

Aug. 17: The Punjab government formally notified Gujrat as the 10th division of the province.

Aug. 17: Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi expanded Rescue 1122 service to all Punjab tehsils.

Aug. 18: COAS Gen Bajwa and Commander of US Central Command (CENTCOM) General Michael E. Kurilla discussed, at a meeting at GHQ, Pakistan-US military training exchange

programme.

Aug. 18: Pakistan signed three Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with Iran in the fields of maritime, museum and information broadcasting.

Aug. 18: PPP's Syed Mehdi shah took oath as sixth governor of Gilgit Baltistan.

Aug. 19: The federal government appointed Jameel Ahmad as the new governor of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

Aug. 19: The federal government appointed Lt-Gen (retd) Hamood-uz-Zaman the defence secretary.

Aug. 19: Brig (retd) Khalid Sajjad Khokhar was re-elected as president of Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) unopposed.

Aug. 19: The government appointed Nadeem Javaid as Chief Economist of Pakistan for a period of two years.

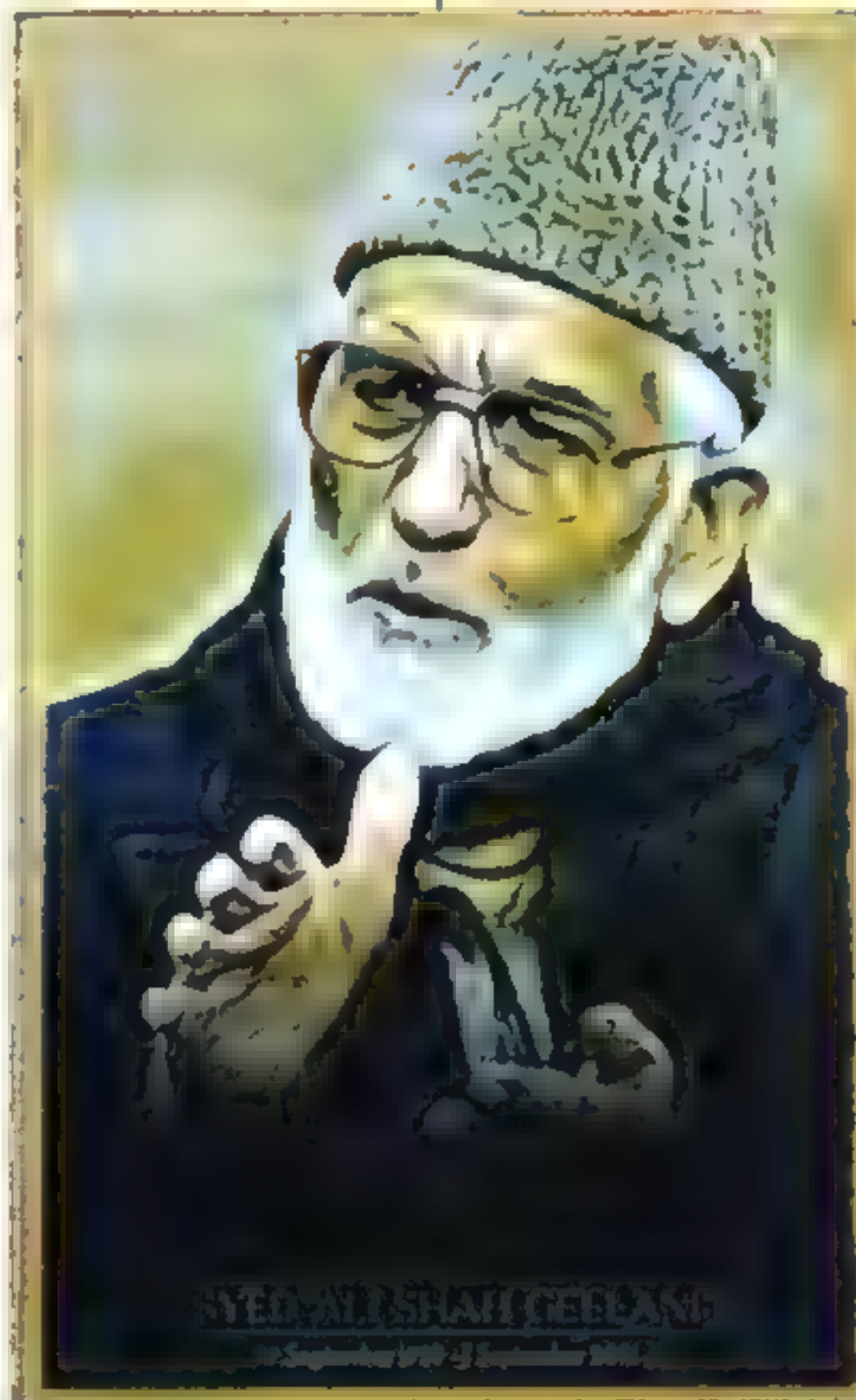
Aug. 19: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif (PMSS) launched a Rs37.2 billion Flood Relief Cash Program to provide Rs25,000 cash assistance each to 1.5 million families across the flood-hit areas of the country

Aug. 19: The Ministry of Commerce and the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) unveiled a comprehensive National Priority Sectors Export Strategy for Pakistan to achieve the country's ambition

of growing its trade.

Aug. 20: Nayyara Noor, one of the most accomplished singers in Pakistan, often called Bulbul-e-Pakistan, passed away

Aug. 20: PMSS directed the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to immediately suspend collection of fixed sales tax through



Pakistan — a dam-scarce country

As compared to 45,000 dams built by 140 countries of the world, Pakistan has only 150 barriers for stopping or restricting the flow of surface water or underground streams.

According to the report of Paris-based International Commission on Large Dams, the top 20 countries with most number of dams include China (23,841), United States (9263), India (4407), Japan (3130), Brazil (1365), South Korea (1338), South Africa (1266), Canada (1156), Mexico (1079), Spain (1064), Turkey (965), France (720), Iran (594), United Kingdom (580), Australia (567), Italy (541), Germany (371), Norway (347), Albania (308) and Zimbabwe (256).

At a time, when water pressure on world governments has never been more intense, arguments for and against the construction of large dams are also surfacing in debates that are being held globally.

Some 30 to 40 percent of irrigated land worldwide depends on dams, besides 19 percent of the world's total electricity is generated through hydropower. It also contributes more than 90 percent of the electricity supply in 24 countries and over 50 percent in 63 countries.

Five countries — Canada, United States, Brazil, China and Russia — account for more than half the world's hydropower generation. Pakistan's Tarbela Dam is the largest earth-filled dam in the world and is second largest by the structural volume.

Estimates suggest that an amount of at least US\$2 trillion has been invested in the construction of large dams over the last century. Of the \$22-31 billion invested in dams each year in developing countries, about four-fifths was financed directly by the public sector. Half the world's large dams were built exclusively or primarily for irrigation, and an estimated 30% to 40% of the 268 million hectares of irrigated lands worldwide rely on dams.

About 13% of all large dams in the world — in more than 75 countries — have a flood management function. Globally, urban water consumption accounts for 7% of total freshwater withdrawals from rivers and 22% from lakes.

While floods have many beneficial functions, they also pose a threat to life, health, livelihoods, and property. They remain among the world's most frequent and damaging disasters. Floods affected the lives, on average, of 65 million people between 1972 and 1996, more than any other type of disaster, including war, drought and famine.

During the same period, an estimated 3.3 million people were left homeless ever. Between 1986 and 1993, an estimated four million people were displaced annually by an average of 300 large dams starting construction each year. The world's two most populous countries — China and India — have built around 57% of the world's large dams, and account for the largest number of people displaced. In the late 1980s, China officially recognised some 10.2 million people as 'reservoir resettlers', though other sources suggest the figure may be substantially higher.

Large dams and reservoirs already built in the Yangtze River basin alone have led to the relocation of at least 10 million people. In India, estimates of the total number of people displaced due to large dams vary from 16 to 38 million people. An estimated 0.5-1% of the total fresh water storage capacity of existing dams is lost each year to sedimentation in both large and small reservoirs worldwide which thereby means that 25% of the world's existing freshwater storage capacity may be lost in the next 25 to 50 years in the absence of measures to control sedimentation. This loss would mostly be in developing countries and regions which have higher sedimentation rates.

electricity bills from small traders and retailers.

Aug. 21: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) retained its seat in the NA-245 by-election.

Aug. 21: The Sindh government declared 23 districts of the province calamity-hit areas.

Aug. 21: Pakistan beat the Netherlands in the third and final One-day International to clean sweep the three-match series.

Aug. 22: The government promulgated an ordinance to slap an additional Rs36 billion tax on cigarettes, Rs2 billion on tobacco processing and reduced levies on transport vehicles.

Aug. 22: The federal cabinet gave approval to the Pakistan Army-Qatar agreement on providing security assistance in the upcoming FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar.

Aug. 22: The KP government declared an emergency in flood-hit areas of Dera Ismail Khan, Upper Chitral, Lower Chitral, and Upper Kohistan districts.

Aug. 22: The Federal Government notified appointment of Captain (r) Muhammad Usman as chairman of the Capital Development Authority (CDA).

Aug. 23: The first meeting of the National Price Monitoring Committee (NPMC) was held.

Aug. 23: A Pakistani student, Misha Pervaz received the bronze medal in the Global Finals of Teeneagle English competition which was held in London.

Aug. 24: Qatar's Diwan-e-Emiri confirmed that the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) aims to invest \$3 billion in Pakistan.

Aug. 25: PMSS announced resumption of departmental sports.

Aug. 25: The FIA established eight police

stations to check money laundering in major cities throughout the country.

Aug. 26: Peshawar High Court (PHC) suspended a notification of the provincial government to authorise an administrative officer for lodging cases against the leaders of the Pakistan Democratic Movement.

Aug. 26: The induction ceremony of PNS TAIMUR, second of four Type 054-A/P multi role frigates, was held at PN Dockyard, Karachi.

Aug. 26: Pakistan appointed Ubaidur Rehman Nizami as new ambassador to Afghanistan vice Mansoor Ahmad Khan.



Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif
signs the **Samarkand Declaration**
at the conclusion of
Council of Heads of States

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)
Samarkand, Uzbekistan

Nasal vaccines: A silver bullet for Covid-19?

The first of nasal vaccines targeting the Sars-CoV-2 were approved this week. A look at how they may be a game-changer

THE CANDIDATES

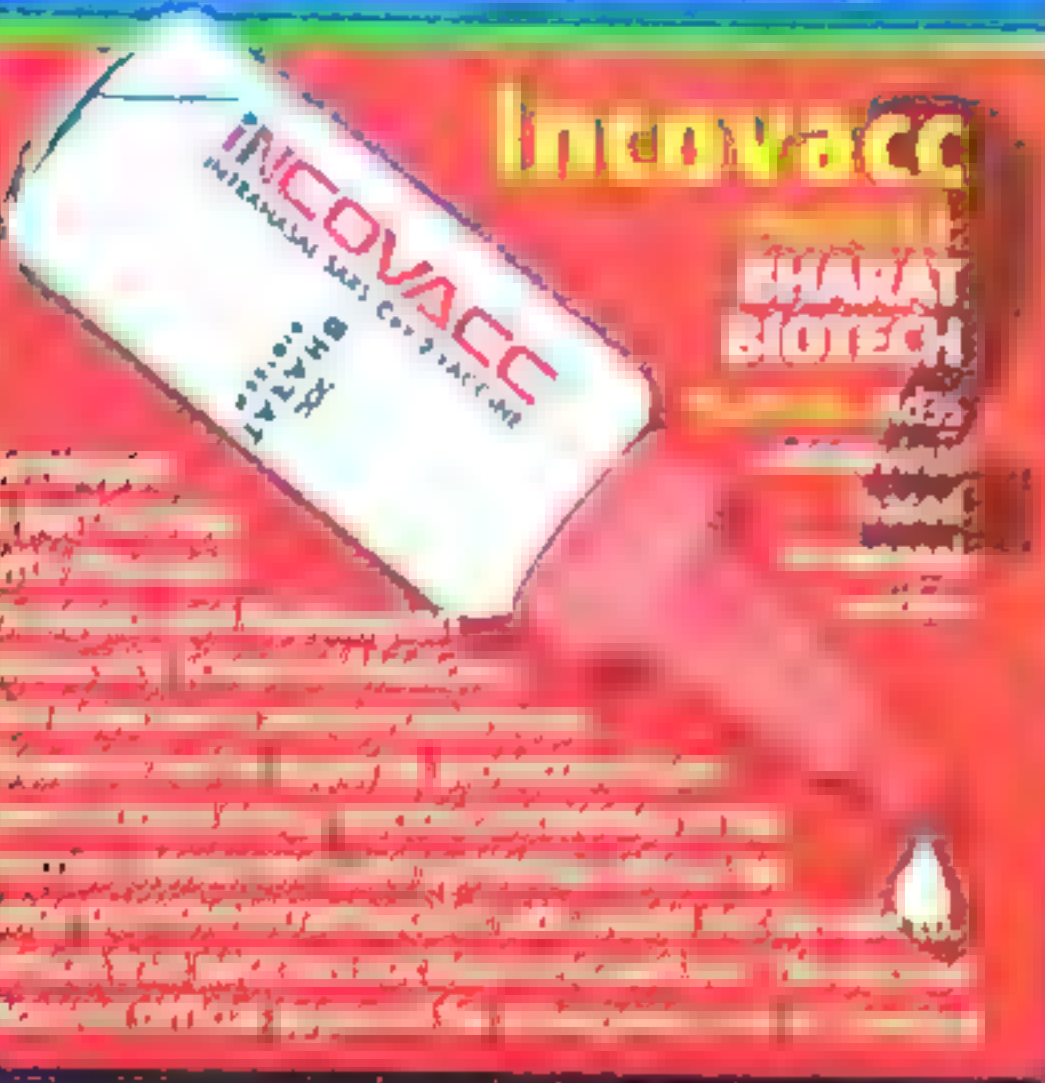
According to the World Health Organization data, there are eight intranasal vaccines under development. Two of these now have received some form of approval

Convidecia Air

PRODUCER: CANSINO BIOLOGICS

Platform: Ad5 adenovirus based inhaled vaccine

In July, Chinese scientists published a pre-print study that one booster dose of the inhaled vaccine led to more antibodies than a conventional booster shot. Four weeks after the dose of the inhaled vaccine, 92.5% of people had antibodies for Omicron, while those who got three doses of the intramuscular jab did not have any.



THE ADVANTAGES

Scientists have described protection from nasal vaccines as akin to "putting guards outside a home, instead of having them inside"



BETTER LUNG PROTECTION:

While a study that showed this involved a different vaccine, scientists at Yale found that the nasal vaccine they tested also lead to IgA antibody secretions in the lung, protecting it better.



MAKES VIRAL ENTRY DIFFICULT:

These vaccines elicit what are known as IgA antibodies, which coat the mucous lining. This is crucial because the coronavirus first infects the mucous membrane in the nose and throat from where it spreads further. In other words, these are likely to prevent infection in the first place.



POSSIBLE DROP IN INFECTIVITY:

Shots delivered to the muscle only marginally limit a vaccinated person's tendency to spread the virus, though they are significantly protected from disease. Nasal vaccines will cut this infectivity drastically, which could blunt new waves.



AND ANY CHALLENGES?

While these vaccines are largely safe, they are tough to get right. Efficacy depends entirely on the bioengineering and platform involved and current candidates employ a wide variety of approaches.

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India's vaccination: In numbers

2.14 billion

Total shots administered

1.03 billion

People jabbed till date

Aug. 26: Pakistan's Fatima Sana was selected by the International Cricket Council (ICC) among its hundred percent Cricket Superstars.

Aug. 27: The most sophisticated radar system known as Lidar (Light Detection and Ranging) started working in Peshawar to gather atmospheric clouds, aerosols, temperature, humidity and other data concerning CPEC area.

Aug. 27: Renowned poet and scholar of Sindhi language Imdad Hussaini passed away.

Aug. 28: Pope Francis called on the international community to help flood-hit Pakistan.

Aug. 29: The IMF Executive Board revived the stalled programme and approved the combined 7th and 8th reviews and release of \$1.1 billion tranche under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF).

Aug. 29: Pakistan hockey legend Manzoor Hussain Junior died. He was 65.

Aug. 30: Pakistan and the United Nations jointly launched the "2022 Pakistan Floods Response Plan (FRP)" seeking Rs 35.8bn (\$160.3m) focusing on the needs of 5.2 million people.

Aug. 31: Pakistan received a \$1.16 billion loan installment from the IMF under the Extended Fund Facility.

Aug. 31: The Balochistan government declared 32 out of the total 34 provincial districts 'calamity-hit'.

Sept. 01: Abrarul Haq was removed as Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS).

Sept. 01: President Arif Alvi appointed Sardar Shahid Ahmed

Laghari as the new PRCS chairman for three years.

Sept. 02: After completion of the 7th and 8th reviews and revival of stalled Extended Fund Facility (EFF) program for Pakistan, the IMF released its staff report which states that amid a tense political landscape, programmed fiscal adjustment was undone and several key EFF commitments were reversed.

Sept. 02: PMSS announced Rs3 billion rehabilitation grant for flood-affected people in Gilgit-Baltistan.

Sept. 02: CM Balochistan Abdul Qudoos Bizenjo appointed Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri as focal person in Karachi to coordinate and mobilize private donations for flood victims in Balochistan.

Sept. 02: Pakistan Petroleum Limited appointed Abid Ashfaq Malik acting managing director and chief executive officer of the company.

Sept. 02: The SC barred politicians from inscribing their names on government lands.

Sept. 03: PMSS established National Flood Response Coordination Centre (NFRCC) to better articulate and synergise flood relief efforts.

Sept. 03: The authorities in Karachi recovered a highly-expensive vehicle, Bentley Mulsanne, which was stolen from London and then shipped to the port city

Sept. 04: The Ismaili Imam announced a donation of \$10 million (Rs2.193 billion) to the Prime Minister's Flood Relief Fund.

Sept. 04: CM KP Mahmood Khan approved the Khyber



Pakhtunkhwa Climate Change Policy 2022.

Sept. 05: A US Congressional delegation (CODL) — led by Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee and comprising Congressmen Tom Souzzi and Al Green — called on PMSS at the PM House.

Sept. 05: CM Punjab Pervaiz Elahi appointed British Pakistani Makhdoom Syed Tariq Mahmood-ul-Hassan as Vice Chairperson of the Punjab Overseas Commission

Sept. 05: The Punjab government designated Mian Aslam Iqbal as senior minister of the provincial cabinet

Sept. 06: The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) called for environmental justice from the global community.

Sept. 06: In its latest report "Narrowing the Disaster Risk Protection Gap in Central Asia," the ADB said that Pakistan urgently needs to enhance the current disaster-risk finance approach as risk-retention mechanisms are insufficient to cover the losses associated with even the most frequent of flood and earthquake events.

Sept. 06: Pakistan & East Africa Connecting Europe (Peace) Cable International Network Co. Ltd completed the construction of a submarine cable infrastructure, providing connectivity from Karachi to Marseille, France

The Peace cable is a 15,000 km submarine cable from Pakistan to France, extended from Pakistan to Singapore for an additional 6,500 kms, with main trunk landing in Singapore, Pakistan, Kenya, Egypt and France and branches to the Maldives, Malta, Cyprus, etc. This submarine cable adds an ultra-fast, high capacity, low latency and redundant connectivity to Pakistan's international connectivity. The Pakistan-Egypt segment connects Karachi and Zafarana, Egypt, and has total length of 5,800 kms. The connectivity from Pakistan to France is now fully completed and ready for service.

Sept. 07: Ayesha Zehri was promoted as Balochistan's first female deputy commissioner.

Sept. 07: The Government of Pakistan and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) signed an advance loan agreement worth \$1.6 million for "Lahore Water and Wastewater Management Project".

Sept. 07: Pakistan German Future Summit was organized in Berlin to promote connections and collaboration between Pakistani startups and German companies.

Sept. 08: Pakistan dropped seven places in the Human Development Index, ranking 161 out of 192 countries in the 2021-2022 HDI

Sept. 08: The ECP postponed the by-polls in 13 constituencies of the National Assembly and provincial legislatures of Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, owing to the engagements of security personnel and other departments in flood-related rescue and relief activities

Sept. 08: The Biden administration approved the possible sale of F-16 aircraft sustainment and related equipment to Pakistan for a cost of 450 million dollars.

Sept. 08: A delegation headed by US State Department Counselor Derek H. Chollet called on COAS Gen Bajwa at the GHQ.

Sept. 08: The United Nations Secretary General António Guterres arrived in Pakistan.

Sept. 08: Hunaid Lakhani, the founder and chancellor of Iqra University, passed away.

Sept. 08: An MoU was signed between Punjab Police and Jiangsu Public Security Department of China under which both departments will work together to protect constitutional rights of each other's citizens, investors, national institutions and official interests in their areas

Sept. 09: PMSS appeared before the IHC in a case related to missing persons.

Sept. 09: COAS Gen Bajwa and US Secretary of Defense General Lloyd James Austin had a telephonic conversation.



Sept. 09: UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres appealed to the international community to boost assistance to Pakistan as it needed massive financial support for rescue-and-relief efforts in the wake of widespread devastation caused by the recent floods.

Sept. 11: Sri Lanka defeated Pakistan to win their sixth Asia Cup cricket title.

Sept. 12: The government launched the 'Digital Flood Dashboard' of the National Flood Response Coordination Center (NFRCC), in a bid to ensure transparency in the relief-and-rehabilitation efforts in flood-hit areas.

Sept. 13: PMSS appointed eight more special assistants, including four PPP MNAs.

Sept. 13: Islamabad formally wrote a letter to Kabul for locating reporting and arresting, Maulana Masood Azhar, the founding head of the banned Jaish E Mohammad (JEM).

Sept. 13: 10-year-old Musa Tanveer became the first Pakistani to have been awarded YouTube's 'Diamond Play Button'.

Sept. 13: The third regional seminar for the parliaments of the



Regional Vibes

This year the leadership of the SCO countries met in the historic Samarkand city of Uzbekistan, at a time when the West and the East seem increasingly divided on issues of preserving European peace, ensuring energy security, responding to climate change and managing future pandemics. Pakistan, which is one of the eight permanent members of SCO alongside China, Russia and India, was also represented at the highest level at the summit, with the PM and his top ministers attending the Eurasian platform.

The Western media is portraying the SCO as an alternative bloc promoted by China and Russia to counter US and its allies' domination in global groupings (such as the G7 and the G20). The US officials have also reportedly given the suggestion lately that China and Russia wish to create a platform of authoritarian countries in order to create a new world order that suits their interests. Then, there is another side to it as well. Apparently, the US-backed world order has lost its aura for folks in the developing countries ever since the Iraq war, 2008 global financial crisis, and the election of Donald Trump.

Considering how Russia stands increasingly isolated after its Ukraine invasion and how China is being treated as a major rival instead of a partner by the West, there is cause for these countries to create a strong separate bloc. If indeed they are being forced to join forces with like-minded nations, the objective could be to defeat Western pressure that has lately intensified through wide-ranging financial sanctions, protectionist policies to favor domestic manufacturing, etc. Hence, the spotlight on the SCO summit.

However, SCO itself is Exhibit-A in how difficult it can be to rally countries

with divergent economic interests, competing territorial claims, and complex geopolitical postures. For instance, while India is firmly aligned with the US and has border disputes with SCO members China and Pakistan, it also has significant energy and arms purchases from Russia. On the one hand, Pakistan is sold on China as an economic and defense partner, but then, because of the former's perennial BOP woes, it has to walk a diplomatic tightrope by remaining engaged with the US and West-backed IFIs. Then, there are other SCO member states from Central Asia that also have active border issues.

Some recent opportunities amidst crises were also missed. For instance, SCO leaders could have stepped up and provided a forceful pandemic-related assistance (e.g. initially PPE supplies and later on Covid-19 vaccines) to other member countries and beyond. SCO also stayed on the sidelines as border disputes intensified between powerful members in recent years. Now, with a third of Pakistan submerged in floodwater and losses mounting, the response from the SCO nations has been less than satisfactory.

Still, for all its contradictions and complexities, SCO has been intact beyond the two-decade mark. Going forward, the challenge for SCO (and other regional platforms elsewhere in the world) is a fundamental one: how can a multilateral platform derive its mandate and play a leading role in regional security and economic development when member nations prefer to settle matters bilaterally, without third-party interventions? The US has historically been adept at achieving meaningful progress in different parts of the globe through its multilateral diplomacy; maybe others can learn a thing or two from that experience.

Asia-Pacific region on Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was held at the National Assembly Hall in Islamabad.

Sept. 14: PMSS waived the electricity bills of flood-affected areas for two months all over the country.

Sept. 14: The Punjab Assembly passed the Punjab Local Government Bill 2021 under which the local bodies polls will be held on party basis.

Sept. 14: Pakistan veterans cricket team downed New Zealand to win the inaugural Over 60s Cricket World Cup.

Sept. 15: Dr Shahbaz Gill finally got bail from the IHC in the sedition case.

Sept. 15: CM Punjab fixed property transfer fee at one percent across the province.

Sept. 15: Asad Rauf, the former ICC elite panel umpire from Pakistan, died.

Sept. 15: PMSS met Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

INTERNATIONAL

Aug. 16: FIFA suspended India's football association because of "undue influence from third parties"

Aug. 16: The Biden administration announced that it will not release \$3.5 billion in frozen Afghan funds, citing the discovery of Al Qaeda leader Ayman al Zawahiri in Kabul

Aug. 17: President Joe Biden signed Democrats' landmark climate change and healthcare bill into law.

Aug. 17: A Saudi court sentenced Salma al-Shehab to 34 years in prison over her Twitter activity.

Aug. 17: Israel and Turkey announced the resumption of full diplomatic ties.

Aug. 18: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Türkiye met his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelensky in Lviv.

Aug. 18: Mohamed Ibrahim Warsame, an award-winning Somali poet who was revered as the "Shakespeare of Somalia," and was better-known by his pen name Hadraawi, died aged 79.

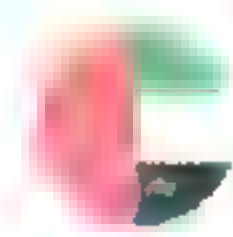
Aug. 19: The US Defence Department announced a \$775 million package of defence equipment for Ukraine.

Aug. 19: Canada nominated Michelle O'Bonsawin as the first Indigenous person to serve on its Supreme Court.

Aug. 19: The fifth Islamic Solidarity Games, which were held in Konya, Türkiye, came to a close.

Aug. 20: Nicole Theriot assumed responsibility as the consul general of the US Consulate General Karachi.

Aug. 20: Greece concluded 12 years of European Union fiscal



United Arab Emirates

Ministry of Happiness

Founded in 2016, the ministry sought to place the UAE within the top five of the UN's list of happiest countries by 2021; however, in 2022, it is in 24th place.



surveillance that was imposed in return for bailouts after a crushing debt crisis.

Aug. 20: The Philippines' Princess Mary Superal secured her first ever international golf title: the Simone Asia Pacific Cup in Indonesia.

Aug. 22: A Saudi court sentenced former Imam of the Grand Mosque Sheikh Saleh al-Taleb to 10-year imprisonment.

Aug. 22: Caroline Garcia won the ATP and WTA Cincinnati Masters.

Aug. 23: The Indian Air Force sacked three officers for the accidental firing of a cruise missile into Pakistan.

Aug. 24: President Joe Biden announced that most US university graduates still trying to pay off student loans will each get \$10,000 in relief.

Aug. 24: The first US ambassador to Sudan in 25 years, John Godfrey, took up his post.

Aug. 24: Germany inaugurated a railway line powered entirely by hydrogen.

Billed as a "zero emission" mode of transport, the trains mix hydrogen on board with oxygen present in the ambient air, thanks to a fuel cell installed in the roof. This produces the electricity needed to pull the train.

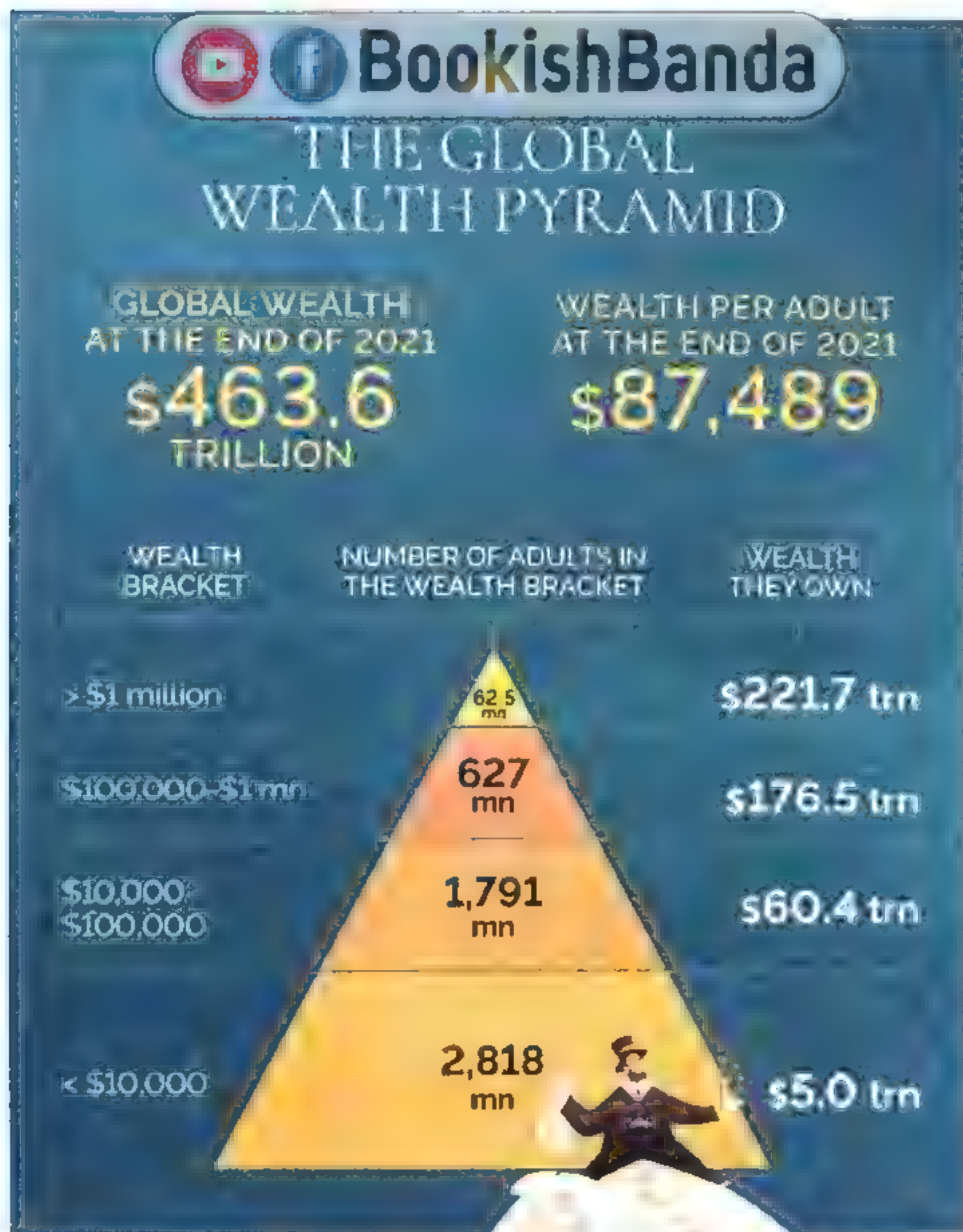
Aug. 24: Thailand's Constitutional Court suspended Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha from office

Aug. 24: A meeting of the Council of Defence Ministers of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's member states was held in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan

Aug. 24: A British-Belgian teenager Mack Rutherford became the youngest person to fly solo around the world.

Aug. 24: President Biden announced nearly \$3 billion in military aid, the biggest US package so far on Kyiv's Independence Day

Aug. 25: The head of Japan's National Police Agency Itaru Nakamura announced his resignation after an investigation confirmed "shortcomings" in the security



plans for former prime minister Shinzo Abe.

Aug. 26: A two-week negotiating session on a treaty to protect the high seas wrapped up.

Aug. 27: Russia prevented the adoption of a joint declaration following a four-week UN conference on a nuclear disarmament treaty.

Aug. 27: Slovakia signed a deal under which fellow Nato states the Czech Republic and Poland will police its skies.

Aug. 27: Uday Umesh Lalit was sworn in as India's Chief Justice, though he will hold the post for 74 days as he is due to retire in Nov.

Aug. 27: Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida pledged \$30 billion over three years for Africa in a virtual address to a development conference in Tunis.

Aug. 28: Two US warships – the USS Antietam and the USS Chancellorsville – sailed through the Taiwan Strait.

Aug. 28: Danish badminton ace Viktor Axelsen won his second world title while Japan's Akane Yamaguchi retained her title in women's singles.

Aug. 29: The British overseas territory of Gibraltar finally joined the official list of British cities.

Aug. 30: Mikhail Gorbachev, the last leader of the Soviet Union, died in Moscow aged 91.

Aug. 30: Indian industrialist Gautam Adani became the world's third-richest person on the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, the first time an Asian has ranked in the top three.

Aug. 30: Camilo Guevara March, the eldest son of communist revolutionary icon Ernesto "Che" Guevara, died aged 60.

Aug. 31: The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) revealed that Earth's concentration of greenhouse gases and sea levels hit new highs in 2021, showing that climate change keeps surging ahead despite efforts to curb emissions.

Aug. 31: EU foreign ministers agreed to suspend a 2007 visa facilitation deal with Russia but stopped short of a wider visa ban as requested by some member states.

Aug. 31: Sri Lanka reached a preliminary agreement with the IMF for a bailout.

Aug. 31: War crimes prosecutors in The Hague urged judges to rule

promptly on their request to resume investigations into atrocities in Afghanistan.

Aug. 31: Russian energy giant Gazprom suspended gas deliveries to Germany on a major pipeline.

Aug. 31: Several Israeli strikes hit Aleppo airport in northern Syria.

Sept. 01: The chairman of Russia's Lukoil oil giant, Ravil Maganov, died.

Sept. 01: Poland estimated the financial cost of World War II losses to be 1.3 trillion euros (dollars) and said it would "ask Germany to negotiate these reparations".

Sept. 01: Rosmah Mansor, wife of Malaysia's ex-premier Najib Razak, was sentenced to 10 years in prison and given a \$216 million fine.

Sept. 01: The World Indoor Athletics Championships that were scheduled for China next year were postponed until March 2025.

Sept. 01: IAEA team made their first visit to Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant in southern Ukraine.

Sept. 02: An Iranian naval flotilla briefly seized two American military unmanned research vessels in the Red Sea.

Sept. 02: A Myanmar junta court sentenced ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi to three years in jail "with hard labour".

Sept. 02: India surpassed Britain to become the world's fifth largest economy.

Sept. 02: G7 industrialised powers vowed to "urgently" move towards implementing a price cap on Russian oil imports.

Sept. 02: Russia scrapped a deadline to resume flows via a major gas supply route to Europe after saying it had discovered a fault in the Nord Stream 1 pipeline during maintenance.

Sept. 02: India debuted its first locally-made aircraft carrier INS Vikrant, one of the world's biggest naval vessels at a length of 262 metres.

Sept. 03: The United States announced a \$1.1 billion arms package for Taiwan, — the largest for Taiwan approved under President Joe Biden's administration.

Sept. 03: United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres named former Kyrgyzstan president Roza Otunbayeva as the UN's new special



1. **Tonsure:** shaved head
2. **Mote:** speck
3. **Lulu:** anything remarkable
4. **Baleful:** menacing
5. **Chary:** cautious
6. **Purveyor:** supplier
7. **Bish:** blunder
8. **Lickspittle:** fawning person
9. **Enumeration:** itemisation
10. **Reconnoitre:** survey
11. **Libertine:** irresponsible
12. **Tendentious:** partisan, not impartial
13. **Termagant:** scolding nagging bad-tempered woman
14. **Effulgence:** radiance
15. **Effluvium:** emission, discharge
16. **Tacky:** gaudy, cheap
17. **Serendipity:** fluke, good fortune
18. **Erogenous:** arousing desire
19. **Defalcation:** embezzlement, peculation
20. **Degauss:** demagnetise
21. **Niggling:** fussy; irritating
22. **Insurrection:** Sedition
23. **Seraphic:** angelic
24. **Inamorata:** beloved woman
25. **Architrave:** trim surrounding a doorway
26. **Joist:** beam supporting a floor
27. **Bauble:** worthless trinket
28. **Par:** average condition
29. **Prig:** self-righteous
30. **Downy:** soft and fluffy

representative for Afghanistan.

Sept. 03: Zimbabwe stunned Australia for the first time in Australia when they beat it by three wickets in the third ODI at the Riverway Stadium.

Sept. 04: Cyrus Mistry, the 54-year-old former chairman of Indian conglomerate Tata Sons, died in a road accident

Sept. 04: The recently developed Covid-19 vaccine by China's CanSino Biologics Inc. was approved by the country's drug regulator for emergency use as a booster.

Sept. 04: Former US president Barack Obama was awarded an Emmy for narrating his Netflix documentary series 'Our Great National Parks'

Sept. 04: Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz nominated Major General Herzi Halevi as the country's next army chief.

Sept. 05: Britain's new Conservative leader Liz Truss was confirmed as Prime Minister Boris Johnson's successor.

Sept. 05: Chileans emphatically rejected a proposed new constitution to replace the one adopted during the Augusto Pinochet dictatorship.

Sept. 06: The EU's executive outlined plans for raising more than 140 billion euros (\$140 billion) to cope with an energy crisis that has increased the prospect of winter fuel rationing, corporate insolvencies and economic recession.

Sept. 06: The US said it was setting up an outside, professionally-run fund to

manage \$3.5 billion in Afghanistan's reserves, concluding it cannot trust the Taliban leadership with the country's money.

Sept. 06: Liz Truss officially became Britain's new prime minister, at an audience with head of state Queen Elizabeth II.

Sept. 07: International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reported that Iran's stock of uranium enriched to up to 60 per cent, close to weapons-grade, has grown to enough, if enriched further, for a nuclear bomb.

Sept. 07: French judges dropped a case against French peacekeepers deployed during Rwanda's 1994 genocide who were accused of being complicit in massacres.

Sept. 07: Albania broke diplomatic ties with Iran over an alleged

BookishBanda

GIVE PEACE A CHANCE

Was set up in the aftermath of World War II to maintain **peace & friendly relations** among countries

Is made up of **193 MEMBER** nations and is headquartered in New York

HAS 6 OFFICIAL LANGUAGES—

English, French, Arabic, Chinese, Spanish and Russian

It has a number of bodies, including the General Assembly, **Security Council**, & **International Court of Justice**, among others



Besides promoting peace promotes sustainable development, upholds international law, protects human rights & delivers aid

GK Tidbits

1. FIFA was founded in Paris on: **21 May 1904**
2. FIFA is headquartered in: **Zürich, Switzerland**
3. The US State Department's special representative for Afghanistan is: **Tom West**
4. The Eastbay Expressway project is located in: **Balochistan**
5. International cricketer Kevin O'Brien who recently announced his retirement from international cricket represented: **Ireland**
6. The author of "Breaking History: A White House Memoir" is: **Jared Kushner**
7. The first US president to be televised was: **Franklin D. Roosevelt**
8. The person who succeeded Abraham Lincoln after he was shot dead by John Wilkes Booth on April 14, 1865 was: **Andrew Johnson**
9. The 17th President of the United States was: **Andrew Johnson**
10. The Taj Mahal was built by the Mughal emperor: **Shah Jahan**
11. Titanic set sail on its maiden voyage on:

April 10, 1912

12. The person who assassinated Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo, Bosnia, in 1914, was: **Gavrilo Princip**
13. World Humanitarian Day is observed annually on: **Aug. 19**
14. The Zaporizhzhia, the biggest nuclear power plant in Europe, is in: **Ukraine**
15. Danish physicist Niels Bohr was awarded the Nobel Prize of Physics in: **1922**
16. Niels Bohr was awarded the Nobel Prize for inventing: **Model of the atom**
17. James Watson discovered the double helix structure of DNA together with: **Francis Crick**
18. Dmitri Mendeleev was a Russian chemist and inventor who is credited for preparing: **The Periodic Table**
19. The poem Kubla Khan was written by: **Samuel Taylor Coleridge**
20. The light bulb was invented by: **Thomas Edison**
21. The inventor of the sewing machine is: **Elias Howe**

22. The East India Company officially took over Punjab on: **29 March 1849**
23. The Battle of Plassey was fought in: **1757**
24. The first capital city of Bengal Presidency was: **Calcutta**
25. The 2022 FIFA football world cup will be played from November 20 to December 18 in: **Qatar**
26. Ryanair is an airline of: **Ireland**
27. Shaheed Allah Bux Soomro University of Art, Design and Heritage is located in: **Jamshoro**
28. At present, Russia's only active female cosmonaut is: **Anna Kikina**
29. Soviet cosmonaut who was the first woman in space was: **Valentina Tereshkova**
30. The first woman to perform a spacewalk, in July 1984, was: **Svetlana Savitskaya**
31. Bratislava is the capital and largest city of: **Slovakia**
32. Jorge Mario Bergoglio is the birth name of: **Pope Francis**
33. Pope Francis was born in: **Buenos Aires**

cyberattack against the government this summer.

Sept. 07: Full gender equality will take almost 300 years to achieve at the current rate of progress, the United Nations warned in a report.

Sept. 07: The US military tested an unarmed intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), the second in less than a month after a previous launch was delayed twice.

Sept. 08: Queen Elizabeth II, the longest-serving monarch in British history and an icon instantly recognisable to billions of people around the world, died. She was 96.

Sept. 08: Charles, Prince of Wales, who at 73 was the oldest heir apparent in British history, became the king immediately after the Queen's death.

Sept. 08: New British Prime Minister Liz Truss froze domestic fuel bills for two years.

Sept. 08: PM Liz Truss selected a cabinet where for the first time a white man will not hold one of the country's four most important ministerial positions.

Sept. 08: The European Commission's satellite monitor revealed that the summer of 2022 was the hottest in Europe's recorded history, with the continent suffering blistering heatwaves and the worst drought in centuries.

Sept. 08: A United Arab Emirates firm signed a contract with Afghanistan to manage air traffic across the country as the Taliban authorities seek to expand international flights.

Sept. 09: The US announced sanctions on Iran's Ministry of Intelligence and Security and its minister Esmail Khatib.

Sept. 09: North Korea passed a law declaring its readiness to launch preventive nuclear strikes. The move effectively eliminates the possibility of denuclearisation talks, with leader Kim Jong Un saying the country's status as a nuclear state is now "irreversible".

Sept. 10: Swiss authorities announced that they have selected



Nordlich Lagers, a site in northern Switzerland not far from the German border, to host a deep geological storage repository for radioactive waste.

Sept. 10: Cate Blanchett won the Best Actress award at the Venice Film Festival.

The best actor award was given to Ireland's Colin Farrell for his part in the tragicomedy *The Banshees of Inisherin* while *All the Beauty and the Bloodshed*.

Sept. 10: Charles III was officially proclaimed king.

Sept. 10: Spanish teenager Carlos Alcaraz claimed his maiden

GK Tidbits

Argentina

34. The Seventh Fleet, which is a core part of US Navy's presence in the Pacific, is based in: **Japan**

35. The First Zionist Congress was convened by Theodor Herzl in Basel, Switzerland, from August 29 to 31 in: **1897**

36. The foundation of Asean was laid on: **Aug 8, 1967**

37. The current head of Israel's Mossad spy agency is: **David Barnea**

38. Pakistan won its only Junior World Cup title in hockey in: **1979**

39. Total number of districts in Balochistan is: **34**

40. The elite force that protects Pope Francis and the 108-acre Vatican City is named: **The Swiss Guard**

41. Energoatom is the nuclear agency of: **Ukraine**

42. The current number of member states of the European Union is: **27**

43. Sweden and Finland applied to join NATO

in: **May 2022**

44. Kirthar National Park was declared a wildlife sanctuary in 1972 and a national park in: **1974**

45. The city often referred to as the financial capital of India is: **Mumbai (Maharashtra state)**

46. Pakistan Air Force Pilot MM Alam made history by shooting down five Indian planes in less than a minute during the war of: **1971**

47. The current Chairperson of Pakistan Congressional Caucus in USA is: **Sheila Jackson Lee**

48. The current Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) is: **Hina Jilani**

49. The late British Queen, Elizabeth II, had toured Pakistan twice in 1961 and: **1997**

50. The current Chief Justice of Balochistan High Court is: **Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan**

51. The Porali river is situated in Bela, the most populated town in: **Lasbela**

52. Karachi's Orange Line bus project named

after the late social worker: **Abdul Sattar Edhi**

53. The Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) highway that connects Quetta and: **Karachi**

54. John F. Kennedy's famous 1962 speech in which he called for landing an American on the lunar surface is called: **the "Moonshot speech"**

55. Baku is the capital of: **Azerbaijan**

56. Yerevan is the capital of: **Armenia**

57. The current President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is: **Duarte Pacheco**

58. Pakistan joined the Asian Development Bank (ADB) as a founding member in: **1966**

59. The full name of Queen Elizabeth-II was: **Elizabeth Windsor**

60. When the Queen was crowned in 1952, the Prime Minister of UK was: **Winston Churchill**

61. The world's first AI CEO Robot is: **Tang Yu**

62. The country that won the first Football World Cup in 1930 was: **Uruguay**

63. Artemis after whom NASA has named its mission to send humans once again on moon is

Grand Slam title at the US Open, becoming the youngest man to ascend to the world number one ranking.

Sept. 11: Spanish writer Javier Marias, whose work has been translated into more than 40 languages in nearly 60 countries, died.

Sept. 11: Iga Swiatek won the third Grand Slam title of her career with a maiden victory at the US Open, defeating Tunisia's Ons Jabeur in straight sets.

Sept. 12: President Joe Biden issued an executive order boosting the US biotech sector as part of his Cancer Moonshot initiative, which invokes the national effort to land a man on the Moon 60 years ago.

Sept. 13: Armenia and Azerbaijan reported nearly 100 troop deaths in their worst fighting since a 2020 war over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region.

Sept. 13: Jean-Luc Godard, one of the most influential filmmakers of the 20th century and the father of the French New Wave, died.

Sept. 14: Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson announced her resignation after an unprecedented right-wing and far-right bloc narrowly won the election.

Sept. 15: Swiss tennis legend Roger Federer announced retirement.

Sept. 15: Joao Lourenco was sworn in for a second term as President of Angola.

Liz Truss, UK's 3rd female prime minister

Mary Elizabeth Truss, being dubbed as the "new iron lady," becomes the UK's new prime minister



Born in Oxford, England in 1975,
her father is a math professor
and mother a nurse

Graduated from the
department of Philosophy,
Politics and Economics at **the
Oxford University**, and then
joined the Conservative Party

**Before winning the Tory
leadership race**, served on a
number of posts under
premiers Boris Johnson,
Theresa May and David
Cameron

**Has been the Secretary of
State for Foreign,
Commonwealth and
Development Affairs since
Sept. 15, 2021**

  **BookishBanda**

Pledges

- Decrease taxes and raise expenditure on defense
- Suspend green levies on energy bills
- Including other nations in proposal to send migrants to Rwanda

GK Tidbits

the Greek goddess of: **Wilderness and hunting**

64. The person who wrote the famous book 'Arthashastra' was: **Kautilya**

65. Ezra Cup is related to the sport of: **Polo**

66. The national game of China is: **Table Tennis**

67. Amalienborg, the home of the Danish royal family, is located in: **Copenhagen**

68. English author who is considered the father of sci-fi is: **Herbert George Wells (HG Wells)**

69. "The Time Machine", "The Island of Doctor Moreau", "The Invisible Man" and "The War of the Worlds" were written by: **GH Wells**

70. The world's first electric motor was built by: **Michael Faraday**

71. South America's largest lake by volume of water and surface area is: **Lake Titicaca**

72. Lake Titicaca sits on the border between Peru and: **Bolivia**

73. The longest river in Canada is: **The Mackenzie River**

74. The capital of Nigeria is: **Abuja**

75. The only continent that has land in all four hemispheres is: **Africa**

76. The smallest state in the United States is: **Rhode Island**

77. The only place in the world where you can see the sun rise on the Pacific and set on the Atlantic is: **Panama**

78. Denali is the highest mountain in: **North America**

79. The only continent to have land both at the Equator and the Prime Meridian is: **Africa**

80. The French Revolution began in 1789 and lasted until: **1794**

81. The Industrial Revolution began from: **Britain**

82. The Berlin Wall was taken down in: **1989**

83. The Great Fire of London broke out in: **1666**

84. The ancient civilization that invented the wheel is: **Mesopotamian**

85. Algeria gained independence from: **France**

86. The 'Lady with the Lamp' is: **Florence Nightingale**

87. The Grand Canyon is located in the US

state of: **Arizona**

88. The driest continent in the world is: **Antarctica**

89. The hottest continent on Earth is: **Africa**

90. The capital of New Zealand is: **Wellington**

91. The country that covers five time zones, but only operates on one, is: **China**

92. The capital of Costa Rica is: **San Jose**

93. The country known by the nickname 'Land of Fire and Ice' is: **Iceland**

94. The biggest ocean on Earth is: **The Pacific**

95. The Strait of Gibraltar separates the Iberian Peninsula from: **Morocco**

96. Constantinople and Byzantium are former names of: **Istanbul**

97. The capital of Canada is: **Ottawa**

98. The Channel Tunnel links England and: **France**

99. The region of Catalonia belongs to: **Spain**

100. Queen Elizabeth II, the UK's longest-serving monarch, died at Balmoral Castle in: **Scotland**

MCQs / NATIONAL

1. On Aug. 16, the _____ Assembly unanimously passed a bill to impose a ban on private business of usury.

- (a) GB (b) Punjab
(c) KP (d) AJK

2. On Aug. 16, _____ President bestowed his country's highest civil award, "Order of Zayed," on Pakistan Army Chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa.

- (a) Qatar (b) Kuwait
(c) UAE (d) Bahrain

3. On Aug. 16, the 2021 Global Hunger Index ranked Pakistan _____ among 116 countries, with a score of 24.7.

- (a) 79 (b) 92
(c) 104 (d) 112

4. On Aug. 17, the 21st Session of the Joint Economic Commission between Pakistan and _____ was held in Islamabad.

- (a) Iran (b) Turkiye
(c) Russia (d) China

5. On Aug. 17, _____ signed a new agreement with Pakistan which will see the return of criminals and immigration offenders from that country to Islamabad.

- (a) Britain (b) Canada
(c) Germany (d) Switzerland

6. On Aug. 17, the Punjab government formally notified Gujrat as the _____ division of the province.

- (a) 9th (b) 10th
(c) 11th (d) 12th

7. On Aug. 18, PPP's Syed Mehdi Shah took oath as _____ GB governor.

- (a) Fourth (b) Fifth
(c) Sixth (d) Eighth

8. On Aug. 19, the federal government appointed _____ as the new governor of the State Bank of Pakistan.

- (a) Jameel Ahmad (b) Yaseen Anwar
(c) Tauqir Shah (d) Murtaza Syed

9. On Aug. 19, the government appointed _____ as Chief Economist of Pakistan for two years.

- (a) Ubaid Khan (b) Mian Aslam
(c) Reza Baqir (d) Nadeem Javaid

10. On _____, Nanyara Noor, one of the most accomplished singers in Pakistan who was often called Bulbul-e-Pakistan, passed away.

- (a) Aug. 17 (b) Aug. 18
(c) Aug. 20 (d) Aug. 22

11. On _____, the federal cabinet gave approval to the Pakistan Army-Qatar agreement on providing security assistance in the upcoming FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar.

- (a) Aug. 20 (b) Aug. 22
(c) Aug. 24 (d) Aug. 26

12. Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif announced the resumption of departmental sports on _____.

- (a) Aug. 25 (b) Aug. 26
(c) Aug. 27 (d) Aug. 28

13. On Aug. 26, Pakistan appointed Ubaidur Rehman Nizamani as new ambassador to _____, vice Mansoor Ahmad Khan.

- (a) Afghanistan (b) China
(c) Russia (d) Turkiye

14. On Aug. 31, Pakistan received a _____ loan installment from the IMF under the Extended Fund Facility.

- (a) \$1.06 billion (b) \$1.16 billion
(c) \$1.86 billion (d) \$2.06 billion

15. On Sept. 01, _____ was removed as Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society and replaced with Shahid Laghari.

- (a) Ali Tareen (b) Aleem Khan
(c) Abrarul Haq (d) Malika Bokhari

16. On _____, PM Shahbaz Sharif established National Flood Response Coordination Centre to better synergise flood relief efforts.

- (a) Aug. 31 (b) Sept. 01

- (c) Sept. 02 (d) Sept. 03

17. On Sept. 03, the authorities in Karachi recovered a highly-expensive vehicle, Bentley Mulsanne, which was stolen from _____ and then shipped here.

- (a) New Delhi (b) New York
(c) Geneva (d) London

18. On Sept. 05, a US Congressional delegation, which was led by Congresswoman _____ called on PM Shahbaz Sharif at the PM House.

- (a) Emma Thomson (b) Ilhan Omar
(c) Sheila Jackson Lee
(d) Ayanna Pressley

19. On Sept. 05, the Punjab government designated _____ as senior minister of the cabinet.

- (a) Murad Raas (b) Aslam Iqbal
(c) Raja Basharat (d) Ali Qureshi

20. The Peace cable is a 15,000 km submarine cable from Pakistan to _____.

- (a) France (b) Turkiye
(c) Belgium (d) Afghanistan

21. The Peace cable is extended from Pakistan to _____ for an additional 6,500 kms.

- (a) Singapore (b) China
(c) UAE (d) Sri Lanka

22. The 5800-km Pakistan-Egypt segment of the Peace cable connects Karachi and _____.

- (a) Alexandria (b) Zafarana
(c) Cairo (d) Sharm El Sheikh

NUCLEAR NATIONS

Estimated global nuclear warhead inventories in 2022





23. On Sept. 07, Ayesha Zehri was promoted as _____ first female deputy commissioner.

- (a) GB's (b) Kp's
(c) Balochistan's (d) AJK's

24. On Sept. 07, Pakistan-German Future Summit was held in _____.

- (a) Karachi (b) Islamabad
(c) Bonn (d) Berlin

25. Pakistan has dropped seven places in the Human Development Index, ranking _____ out of 192 countries in the 2021-2022 HDI.

- (a) 147 (b) 154
(c) 161 (d) 187

26. On _____, the Biden administration approved the possible sale of F-16 aircraft sustainment and related equipment to Pakistan for a cost of 450 million dollars.

- (a) Sept. 05 (b) Sept. 06
(d) Sept. 07 (d) Sept. 08

27. The United Nations Secretary General António Guterres arrived in Pakistan on _____.

- (a) Sept. 05 (b) Sept. 06
(d) Sept. 07 (d) Sept. 08

28. On Sept. 11, _____ defeated Pakistan to win their 6th Asia Cup cricket title.

- (a) Sri Lanka (b) India
(c) Bangladesh (d) Afghanistan

29. The final of the Asia Cup 2022 was played on Sept. 11 at _____.

- (a) Dubai (b) Sharjah
(c) Ajman (d) Abu Dhabi

30. On Sept. 13, PM Shahbaz Sharif appointed _____ more special assistants, including four PPP MNAs.

- (a) 5 (b) 8
(c) 10 (d) 11

31. On Sept. 13, the 10-year-old Musa Tanveer became the first Pakistani to have been awarded YouTube's _____ Play Button.

- (a) Silver (c) Diamond
(c) Golden (d) Platinum

32. On Sept. 13, the third regional seminar for the parliaments of the Asia-Pacific region on Achieving the SDGs was held in _____.

- (a) Shanghai (b) Tokyo
(c) Bangkok (d) Islamabad

33. On Sept. 14, the _____ Assembly passed a bill under which the next election for local bodies will be held

on party basis.

- (a) Sindh (b) Balochistan
(c) KP (d) Punjab

34. On Sept. 14, Pakistan veterans downed _____ to win the inaugural Over 60s Cricket World Cup.

- (a) India (b) Australia
(c) New Zealand (d) West Indies

35. Asad Rauf, the former ICC elite panel umpire, died on _____.

- (a) Sept. 11 (b) Sept. 12
(c) Sept. 14 (d) Sept. 15

36. Balochistan was made a province in _____.

- (a) 1970 (b) 1973
(c) 1985 (d) 1988

37. The founder of Dawn newspaper was _____.

- (a) ZA Suleri (b) Hameed Niazmi
(c) Javed Mir (d) Quaid-i-Azam

38. The Siachen conflict between Pakistan and India broke out in _____.

- (a) 1948 (b) 1965
(c) 1965 (d) 1984

39. PM Shahbaz Shrif met Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, on _____.

- (a) Sept. 12 (b) Sept. 13
(c) Sept. 14 (d) Sept. 15

40. Natural gas was discovered at Sui, Balochistan, in _____.

- (a) 1948 (b) 1949
(c) 1950 (d) 1952

were held in _____, Turkiye.

- (a) Ankara (b) Istanbul
(c) Izmir (d) Konya

5. The current Consul General of the US Consulate General Karachi is _____.

- (a) Derek Chollet (b) Panfilo Marquez
(c) Donald Blome (d) Nicole Theriot

6. On Aug. 20, _____ concluded 12 years of EU fiscal surveillance that was imposed in return for bailouts after a crushing debt crisis.

- (a) Latvia (b) Malta
(c) Greece (d) Iceland

7. On Aug. 24, John Godfrey, the first US ambassador to _____ in 25 years, took up his post.

- (a) Sudan (b) Syria
(c) Ecuador (d) Lebanon

8. On Aug. 24, _____ inaugurated a railway line powered entirely by hydrogen.

- (a) China (b) Germany
(c) Italy (d) Norway

9. On Aug. 24, _____ Constitutional Court suspended Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha from office.

- (a) Thailand's (b) Cambodia's
(c) Vietnam's (d) Mongolia's

10. On Aug. 24, a meeting of the SCO's Council of Defence Ministers was held in Tashkent, the capital of _____.

- (a) Turkmenistan (b) Uzbekistan
(c) Azerbaijan (d) Tajikistan

11. On Aug. 24, a British-_____ teenager Mack Rutherford became the youngest person to fly solo around the world.

- (a) American (b) Australian
(c) Belgian (d) German

12. On Aug. 27, _____ signed a deal under which fellow Nato states the Czech Republic and Poland will police its skies.

- (a) Moldova (b) Latvia
(c) Iceland (d) Slovakia

13. On Aug. 27, Uday Umesh Lalit was sworn in as India's Chief Justice but for only _____ days before his retirement falls due in November.

- (a) 50 (b) 60
(c) 67 (d) 74

14. On Aug. 29, the British overseas territory of _____ finally joined the official list of British cities.

- (a) Cayman Islands (b) Bermuda
(c) Gibraltar (d) None of these

INTERNATIONAL

1. On Aug. 16, FIFA suspended _____ football association because of "undue influence from third parties".

- (a) India's (b) China's
(c) Pakistan's (d) UAE's

2. On Aug. 17, Israel and _____ announced the resumption of full diplomatic ties.

- (a) Syria (b) Turkiye
(c) Jordan (d) Sudan

3. On Aug. 19, _____ nominated Michelle O'Bonsawin as the first Indigenous person to serve on the country's Supreme Court.

- (a) New Zealand (b) Barbados
(c) Canada (d) Australia

4. The fifth Islamic Solidarity Games

15. Mikhail Gorbachev, the last leader of the Soviet Union, died in Moscow aged 91 on _____.

- (a) Aug. 29 (b) **Aug. 30**
(c) Aug. 31 (d) Sept. 01

16. The first Asian to be counted among the top three richest persons in the world is _____.

- (a) **Gautam Adani** (b) Mukesh Ambani
(c) Cyrus Mistry (d) Ratan Tata

17. On _____, Camilo Guevara March, the eldest son of communist revolutionary icon Ernesto "Che" Guevara, died.

- (a) Aug. 28 (b) Aug. 29
(d) **Aug. 30** (d) Aug. 31

18. Caracas is the capital of _____.

- (a) Cambodia (b) **Venezuela**
(c) Brazil (d) Cuba

19. On Sept. 01, Rosmah Mansor, wife of _____ ex-premier Najib Razak, was sentenced to 10 years in prison and given a \$216 million fine.

- (a) Indonesia's (b) Turkiye's
(c) **Malaysia's** (d) Singapore's

20. On Sept. 01, the World Indoor Athletics Championships that were scheduled for _____ next year were postponed until March 2025.

- (a) USA (b) Switzerland
(c) Mexico (d) **China**

21. India has surpassed _____ to become the world's fifth largest economy.

- (a) France (b) Japan
(c) Germany (d) **Britain**

22. On Sept. 02, India debuted its first locally-made aircraft carrier INS _____ that is one of the world's biggest naval vessels at a length of 262 metres,

- (a) Shakti (b) Sagar
(c) **Vikrant** (d) Prithvi

23. On Sept. 03, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres named former _____ president Roza Otunbayeva as the UN's special representative for Afghanistan.

- (a) Iranian (b) **Kyrgyz**
(c) Mongolian (d) Turkish

24. On Sept. 03, _____ stunned Australia for the first time on the latter's home soil when they beat it by three wickets in the third ODI at the Riverway Stadium.

- (a) **Zimbabwe** (b) Bangladesh
(c) New Zealand (d) Afghanistan

25. On Sept. 04, former US president _____ was awarded an Emmy for narrating his Netflix documentary series 'Our Great National Parks'.

- (a) **Barack Obama** (b) Bill Clinton
(c) Donald Trump (d) George W. Bush

26. On _____, Liz Truss officially became Britain's new prime minister, at an audience with head of state Queen Elizabeth II.

- (a) Sept. 05 (b) **Sept. 06**
(c) Sept. 07 (d) Sept. 08

27. On Sept. 07, _____ broke diplomatic ties with Iran over an alleged cyberattack against the government this summer.

- (a) Oman (b) **Albania**
(c) Armenia (d) Azerbaijan

28. Queen Elizabeth II, the longest-serving monarch in British history, died on _____ at 96.

- (a) Sept. 05 (b) Sept. 06
(c) Sept. 07 (d) **Sept. 08**

29. On Sept. 08, Charles, Prince of _____, became the king immediately after the Queen's death.

- (a) Sussex (b) Waterloo
(c) Windsor (d) **Wales**

30. On Sept. 09, _____ passed a law declaring its readiness to launch preventive nuclear strikes.

- (a) Ukraine (b) Russia
(c) **North Korea** (d) Israel

31. On Sept. 10, _____ teenager Carlos Alcaraz became the youngest man to be the world number one in tennis.

- (a) **Danish**
(b) **Spanish**
(c) Australian
(d) Swiss

32. On _____, Spanish writer Javier Marias, whose work has been translated into more than 40 languages in nearly 60 countries, passed away.

- (a) **Sept. 11**
(b) Sept. 12
(c) Sept. 13
(d) Sept. 14

33. On Sept. 13, Jean-Luc Godard, one of the most influential

filmmakers of the 20th century and the father of the _____ New Wave, died.

- (a) **French** (b) German
(c) Italian (d) American

34. On Sept. 14, _____ Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson announced her resignation.

- (a) Dutch (b) **Swedish**
(c) Norwegian (d) Belgian

35. On Sept. 15, _____ tennis legend Roger Federer announced retirement.

- (a) German (b) Dutch
(c) **Swiss** (d) Serbian

36. British monarch, Queen Elizabeth II, has been laid to rest at _____.

- (a) Cornhill in Ipswich
(b) Winchester Cathedral
(c) Wellington Arch
(d) **Westminster Abbey**

37. Yen is the currency of _____.

- (a) Brazil (b) Argentina
(c) Thailand (d) **Japan**

38. The equipment that is used specifically to hand off to teammates in relay races is _____.

- (a) Racket (b) Stick
(c) **Baton** (d) Ball

39. The first UN peacekeeping mission was established in May _____.

- (a) 1946 (b) **1948**
(c) 1950 (d) 1954

40. The largest planet in our solar system is _____.

- (a) Saturn (b) Venus
(c) Uranus (d) **Jupiter** 

ITALY ELECTION 2022

GIORGIA MELONI **BROTHERS OF ITALY**

"I am Giorgia. I am a woman. I am a mother. I am Italian. I am Christian"

- Won first local election at 21
- Expressed support for Benito Mussolini in youth, later shifted tone
- Co-founded political party Brothers of Italy in 2012 with veterans of conservative National Alliance
- Advocates for: traditional family values, tighter borders

